Jerub-baal,

OR THE

Pleader impleaded.

BEING

An Answer to Mr. *Croftons* (lately published) Plea *for Communion with the Church under her present Corruptions*, &c.
Entituled
Reformation not Separation.

By way of humble *Remonstrance* thereunto.

SHEWING,

That *Non-Communion with the Church of* England *in her Liturgy and Common-Prayer, in those that* (*yet*) *joyn with her in the substantial Ordinances and instituted Worship of Christ*, is no *Schism*, and that Such are unjustly called *Separatists.*

In a Letter written by *T. P.* for the private satisfaction of a Friend, and by him published for Common benefit.

In cujus perniciem aliquando convenimus ? hoc sumus congregati quod et dispersi, hoc universi quod et singuli, neminem ladentes, neminem contristantes. Tertul. Apolog. adversus Gent.

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A Letter *Written by* T. P. *for the ſatisfaction of a Friend, in caſe of* Non-Communion *with the Church of* England *in her* Liturgy *and* Common-Prayer.

Honoured Sir;

SChiſm being a *diſſolution* and *breach* of *Union*, 'twill not be amiſſe, if for the better underſtanding of the nature of the *Schiſm* in queſtion, we make ſome enquiry into that *Church-Union* whereof it is a breach: Now, from the *diſtinct notions* and *acceptions* of the *Church*, the nature of *Church-Union* will beſt appear.

The *Church* of Chriſt, (even that which is *Militant* (for the *Triumphant* comes not here to be conſidered) is uſually diſtinguiſhed into

1. *Catholick*.
2. *Particular*.

The *Catholick* Church again, into

1. *Viſible*.
2. *Inviſible*.

1. The *Catholick Viſible* Church is the *Univerſality* of Perſons *called by the Word* into *External* Fellowſhip with Chriſt, and Communion amongſt themſelves, *profeſſing the true Religion*, the Faith, Doctrine, and Worſhip of Chriſt throughout the world; called *Viſible* in reſpect of *Outward Adminiſtration* and *Profeſſion*.

2. The *Catholick-Invisible* Church is the *Collective Body* of the truly *Faithfull*, the compleat *Quorum* of the *Elect*, Gods *Chosen* ones, *called* out of the whole World of Mankind, into an intimate *Union* with Christ, and *Communion* one with another, not only *externally* by the *Word*, but *effectually* and *internally* by Gods holy *Spirit*; called *Invisible*, non *quá* Men, but *quá* Elect, the *Man* is seen, but not the *Christian*: *The Lord* (only) *knoweth them that are his*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. The *Church-Catholick* is under both those considerations, called the *Mystical Body* of Christ, *viz.* 1. By *League* & Outward *Profession* under the former; 2. By true *Faith* and real *Possession* under the latter: *Christ* is a *Common Head* both to the one, and to the other.

2. A *Particular* Church is a *Society* or *Societies* of Persons called to the *participation* of, and subjected to the Ordinances and instituted worship of Christ, under certain external Rules accommodated for *Local Joynt-Communion* therein, in a *particular place*: Such are the *English*, *French*, *Dutch* Churches, and such like, including *Parochial Distributions* and *Congregations* as the Church *Catholick* includes them, *viz.* as a *totum Integrale*, or *Universale*, so as that *nec totum rectè de una prædicetur, nec una totum sibi vindicare possit*, saith *Junius*, *lib. de Ecclesia*; though the *Papists* make a kind of *Monopoly* of their *Romish* Church, obtruding it for a *Catholick*, yea, the *only Catholick* Church in the World; and thus by a cursed Sacriledge *impropriate* (as I may say) the Church of Christ.

This *Distinct Notion* of the Church, ariseth from the diversified Nature of her *Members* (the *Constitutive Matter* thereof) who may be considered, either 1. as *Professors* of the Faith of Christ, in obedience to an *Externall* Call by the *Word*; those constitute the Church *Catholick-Visible*: or 2. as *Possessors* of Christ by *Faith* (*true Believers*) in Obedience to an *Internall* Call by the *Spirit*; those

those constitute the Church *Catholick-Invisible*; or 3. as *Partakers* of the same Ordinances and instituted worship of Christ, in a particular place, in Obedience to a *Providential* Call, and in answer to an *Opportunity* serving thereunto; those constitute a *Particular* Church, so that the same Persons may be *Members* of the *Church* under that *threefold* consideration at once.

Church-Union then must be *threefold*, or considerable under a *threefold Notion*.

1. The First is the *Union* of the Members of the Church *Catholick-Invisible*, with *Christ*, and their *Communion* amongst *themselves*, wherein they are, through the *Inhabitation* and *Indwelling* of the same *Holy Spirit* in all, and by vertue of a *true Faith*, joyntly *incorporated* into Christ, and *concorporated* one with another; as *Fellow-Members* of the same *Select Fraternity*, the Son of God having assumed their *Persons* into a *Mystical*, as well as their *Nature* into a *Personal Union* with himself.

Now *Sir*, This *Union* admits of no *breach*, Christ and his *Elect* Members (the true *Branches* of that true *Vine*) are *inseperably* conjoined; their *Persons* (as well as their *Nature*) are eternally matched and married to Christ; the *Mystical Union* of the one, is *indissoluble*, as well as the *Personall Union* of the other with him. There is no fear of a *divorce* here; neither can the *Body* be severed from the *Head*, nor any one *Member* from the *Body*: the Members may quarrel (an *Israelite* with an *Israelite*) thus we read that *Paul* and *Barnabas* did contest and contend so fiercely, that their *Paroxysme* of strife ended in *Separation*, Act. 15. 39. Yea, they may joyn to their breach of *Society*, a breach of *Charity* in some degree; but neither is the one nor the other a dissolution of that *Internal* Union whereby the truly *Faithfull* are coupled together, one with another, and all of them joyntly with their *Common Head*, Christ. The *Vinculum Unionis*, the *Conjugal-Union-Knot* (viz: true *Faith*, or the *Spirit* of grace

in

in the Faithfull) being altogether *inviolable*. The *Holy Ghost* is the *Fountain-Radical* of Faith, (as of all other Graces) and therefore of this *Communion*. One *Spirit* quickening & influencing both Head and Members in the *Mystical*, as one *Soul* conveys life and sense to all the Members of the *Natural* Body, (and hence 'tis I conceive, that Christ and Beleevers are said to be, not *One Body* onely, but *One Spirit* (viz: *in Esse Mystico*) 1 Cor. 6. 17.) Now this same *Spirit* may suspend his influences, viz: *Comfortable* and *Augmentative*, not *Vital* (as in the dark and solitary dayes of *soule-desertion*) and *Faith* may in such a case be much weakened and impaired, (viz: in its *Graduals*) but *True Faith* being the *Seed of God* (1 John 3. 9.) is, *in Esse vitali*, as to its *Truth* and *Nature* (*intrinsecally*) *permanent*, an *irreradicable* principle, *Perseverance* and *indeficiency* being its *Genuine property*, as well as Christs *purchase*, Luke 22. 32. there is a kind of *Immortality* in it; So that, as there is a *weakness* in the *strongest* Faith, so there is *truth* in the *weakest*; now this *Vnion* depends not upon the *strength*, but upon the *truth* of Faith; and not upon the *Gradual Communications*, but upon the *Radical Inhabitation* of the Spirit: Such a *suspension* then, is unfitly termed a *seperation*, (*David* lost *Comfort*, but not the *Comforter*, Psal. 51. 11, 12.) or if we grant (with some) that it is (a breach *in tantum*, though not *in totum*) a breach *in*, yet 'tis no interruption or breach *of*, *Vnion*, but rather a *temporary intermission* of (Comfortable) *Communion*. What though the *Trees of Righteousnesse* have their *Autumn*-season, their *fall of the leaf* (the trees of the *Vineyard*, as well as those of the *Forrest*)? There is still an *Indeficient* principle of life in them, by vertue of their incision and ingrafture into their Common *Root*, Christ, the *Tree of Life*. This is both defensive and offensive Armour against our *Arminian* Adversaries, who daringly assert a *Schism* and *Seperation* here, *de possibilis*; that is, that 'tis possible for the truly Faithfull,

Faithfull, *totally* and *finally* to apoſtatize from Chriſt, and thus, of true *Converts*, to become very *Caſt-awayes*; ſad doctrine! Might we receive what they obtrude for *Orthodoxy*, verily we might betake our ſelves to our pen, and write our *faith vain*, all our prayers loſt, and *our ſelves of all men moſt miſerable*. *If the foundation be deſtroyed, what can the Righteous do?* But now here is the Beleevers *Fort-Royal*, namely his *Inviolable Conjunction* with his *Living Head*, Chriſt; this is an impregnable bottom of *Saint-ſtability*, ground of *Chriſtian-perſeverance*, and guard againſt their *total-final Apoſtacy*: *Quatenus unimur, munimur*, this *Unity* is our *Safety*. By vertue of this (to ſpeak a big word) the State of *grace* is equally *ſafe*, (though not equally *comfortable*) with the State of *glory*; and the Spiritual State of the *weakeſt*, equally *ſafe* (though not equally *comfortable*) with that of the *ſtrongeſt* Beleever; *ſalvation* being annexed to a *Real Union* with Chriſt, which is grounded on the *truth* of Faith, not to *comfortable Communion* with him, which ordinarily attends the *raiſed degrees*, and *ſtrength* of Faith. Conclude we then all the Members (yea the very meaneſt) of the Church *Inviſible* to be (in this ſenſe) *Invincible*; *dye* they must, *periſh* they ſhall not, cannot, —*None of them is* loſt. *Obeunt non pereunt.*

The ſecond is that *Union* and *Communion* wherein all the Members of the Church-*Catholick-Viſible*, the *Profeſſors* of the true Religion, throughout the world, are by vertue of their *Common Profeſſion* of *One Lord*, *One Faith*, *One Baptiſme*, Goſpel-doctrine, and worſhip, united amongſt themſelves, and joyntly concorporated with Chriſt, as One Entire *Body Catholick*. Now to apply this to our purpoſe: Eph: 4. 5.

1. The *Union* that is between Chriſt and the *Catholick Viſible*-Church, conſidered as a *Collective* Body of Profeſſors, is alſo *un-interruptible*, admits of no *breach*: She (in this ſenſe) can neither, by Univerſal Apoſtacy, *fall off*

off, nor by any Violence, be *broken off* from her *Common Head*, Christ. True, The Church hath her *Moon-like* waxings and weanings, *gradual* though not *substantial Changes*. *SIONS Sun* hath his *Apogæums*, and *Perigæums*: The *Waters of the Sanctuary*, their *Reciprocations*, they (often) *ebb* as well as *flow*; The Churches *Glory* is frequently (what by *Intestine* Corruptions and Divisions, what by *forreign* Combinations against her, and *Torrents* of persecution) clouded and eclipsed, insomuch that an *ICHABOD* might often seem, best to become her whom (yet) her Lord hath dignified with this title of honour, *Christ-Mystical*.

But the *Light* of the Church (though often *eclipsed*) was never as yet *extinguished*; being continually renewed by the *Auxiliary* influences of the great *Sun of Righteousnesse*. The *Truth* hath in no age wanted either *Patron* or *Proselyte*. The *Visible* Church surely was very *Consumptive* when the whole *Body* seemed to be contracted to one *Member*, abridged in a single *Elijah* (that second *Jerub-baal*, a *Champion-Zealot* for the Truth) and yet even then were there no less than 7000 *Non-Conformists* in *Israel*, 1 King 19. 10. 14. 18. God had got their *Hearts*, and now *Baal* shall not so much as have a *knee*. Reflect we upon the Primitive Churches *Sanguine Complexion* under the Tyranny and ten Persecutions of the *Heathenish Heroes*, when the whole earth was * *purpled* and *scarleted* with *Martyr-blood*: when the very *name* of *Christian* was a *Crime*, when he that professed himself a *Christian* dyed by a *Sanguinary* Law enacted to that purpose, without either self-defence or conviction; when thousands were dispatched being *nominis tantum et sectæ rei*, guilty of a meer name (*Christian*). When *Diocletian* that Infernal Wolf, (having upon a Hell-devised Oracle or Prophecy, *viz*: That if the Christians were but once cut off, the *Roman* Empire would wonderfully flourish) caused no lesse than 17000 to be massacred in one moneth)

* Aug. in Psa. 118. Vid. Corn. Tacit. *Lib.* 5. *Annal.* Tertul. Apolog. *adverſ. Gent.*

moneth) did most wickedly boast *De deleto nomine Christiano*, That he had everlastingly rased out of memory, and utterly abolished the very *name* of a *Christian*; yet could not the *sword* of violence ever intersect the line of *Church-Succession*; yea the more they were *mowed* down, the more they *multiplyed*; *Plures efficimur, quoties metimur*, saith that *Christian-Mecænas*, * *Tertullian*. Againe, who could have expected any to have appeared for the patronage of the Truth, under the *Torrid Zone* of *Antichristian* persecution? and yet behold even then, hath Christ his *two Witnesses*, Rev. 11. *Two*, though, *but two*; though the *least* number, yet *a number*; though a *small*, yet a *competent* number; a *Quorum* of Witnesses, by whose testimony the opposed Truth should be protected and established; so impossible a thing it is that Christ should ever be Ἀμάρτυρος, *without a Witnesse*. Call we to mind *Modern* Persecutors, That *English Lioness* Q. M. with her *Wolf* and *Leopard*, *Brethren in iniquity*; Bloody *Charls* the *fifth*, and the Duke of *Alva*, both which *died* their souls *red* with *blood*, they having destroyed, of *Protestants*, the one 50000 in the Low Countries, the other 18000 in *Belgia* in six years time; the *French Massacre Anno* 1572. Even all the conflicts between the *seed of the Woman*, and the *seed of the Serpent*, since the quarrel was first begun in Paradise, which hath been fiercely pursued well nigh *six thousand years*: All that time hath God *uninterruptedly* maintained a continued *Series* and *Succession* of Persons, (notwithstanding *Captivities* and hostile *Cruelties*) *Patriarks*, *Prophets*, and all the *Old-Testament*-Professors; *Apostles*, *Fathers*, *Councels*, *Confessors*, *Martyrs*, and all *New-Testament*-Saints; in and by whom the true Religion, hath been professed, preserved, and (*successively* though not alwayes very *successefully*) propagated, *kept* by some, *guarded* by others, and (through good providence) *transmitted*, by all to us. 'Tis impossible that Christ should want a *Seed* Isa. 53. 10.

* Apolog. adver. Gent.

(a Church) or that Church, a *Guardian* and *Defendor of the Faith*: For the Church to be *Christ-lesse*, and for Christ to be *Church-lesse*, are equall impossibilities. The Church Militant is Christs *Sublunary* Kingdom, which admits of no *Interregna*, or *Vacancy*: There is in her (though not an *Infallibility*) yet an *Indeficiency*; Subject she is to *Corruption* within, but not to *Interruption*; to *Obstruction* from without, but not to *destruction*. She is a house *built upon a Rock*, Mat. 16. 18. and this *Rock* is Christ, (the *Foundation*, as well as *Founder* of his Church), therefore she must needs be Impregnable and Invincible; —*The Gates of Hell shall not prevaile against her*: A promise ever made good to the *Whole Body* of the *Catholick-Visible*, as it is to every *Individual Member* of the *Catholick-Invisible*-Church.

2°. That the *Union* which is between Christ and *Particular Visible* Professors and Churches, (parts of the Church *Catholick-Visible*) may be *broken* and *interrupted*, is a truth that hath been verified in many sad experiences; forasmuch as all are not *Israel*, that are called *Israel*: Many *Particular* Churches and *Councels* (however our Neighbours in the Church of *Rome* amongst the rest of their *Romish strange-fire*, ascribe an *Infallibility* and *unerring* Quality to them, yet) are known to have so far degenerated as to become instead of *Churches* of *Christ*, *Synagogues* of *Satan*; witnesse the Churches of *Asia* (which (though once recorded for *Golden Candlesticks*, Rev. 2. yet) are at this day the Receptacles of *Mahometan* Idolatry) *Judea* (that *degenerate Vine*) *Rome* (that *Adulterate See*) &c. But this is not only *Schisme*, but *Apostacy*, being a *degeneracy* from the true *Catholick-Apostolick* Faith, and a *Separation* from, or, *not holding of the head, from which all the body by joynts and bands having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God*, (Col. 2. 19.) which is inconsistent, not onely with the *Unity*, but with the *Verity* and very *Being* of

of a (true) Church; whence those Churches are deservedly called *Apostatical*, as well as *Schismatical*, and *Renegadoes* or *Fugitives* from the Faith of Christ, such as *Parphyrie*, *Julian*, miserable *Spira*, and such like (who have of *Visible* and *Professed* Members of the Body, become Enemies to the Head, some of them turning open *Persecutors* of that Faith whereof they were once *Professors*) are not barely called *Separatists*, but branded for cursed *Apostates*.

3. The *Communion* wherein the Members of this great *Corporation* the Church *Catholick-Visible* are by vertue of their *Common Profession* of the true Religion, and Faith of Christ, united one with another, is subject to a twofold *Schism* or breach; viz: 1. A breach *in* the Church, and 2. A breach *from* the Church: The first consists in *Intestine Divisions* and *differences*, either 1. in point of *Judgement*, and that (principally) about matters either of *Discipline* or *Worship* (if the *Error* be in a point *fundamental* or *incorrigibly persisted* in, it is then *Heresie*, which Sr. *Augustine* calls *Schisma inveteratum*); or else 2. in point of *Charity* and Christian *Love*. The second consists in a *degeneracy* from the *true Religion*, and a *voluntary relinquishing* of a *Church-state* but this is (as I have said above of *not holding of the Head*) not *Schisme* onely, but *Apostacy*, a *Cat holick* and *Universal Separation*; for one that thus relinquisheth Christs *Body-Catholick*, separates from it, *Tanquam Membrum ab Integro*, as a *Member* from the *Whole*; now as a Leg or Arm, when lost, ceaseth to be a member of the body Natural, to which it was united, even so a Professor thus degenerated, ceaseth, *In statu quo*, (without recovery by repentance) to be a Member of this Body Mysticall. Whereas many are most justly condemned for *Separatists* (I shall not need to name any) who (yet) while they *hold the Head*, and professedly *own* the *Catholick-Apostolick* Faith of Christ, cannot be *disowned* for *Members* of the

Body, *Branches* in the *Vine*, *Part* of the *Mystical Building*, the *Church Catholick-Visible*: *Church-Communion* is distinguishable into

1. *Real.*
2. *Personal.*

There is a *Real Community*, and a *Personal Society*: now though those *Separatists* refuse, by way of *Personal Association* to communicate with that Church from which they separate, yet they continue a *Real Saint-Communion* and *Fellowship* with her in the Enjoyment of the same (*Objective*) Ordinances; *Prayer*, *Word*, and *Sacraments*, and therefore notwithstanding their *Separation* from a *Particular*, they cease not to be Members of the *Catholick* Church; *Real Community* being maintained, though *Personal Society* be (unjustly) denyed.

The Third *Church-Union* is that *Social-Local-Joynt-Fellowship*, wherein the Members of a *Particular* Church are united one with another, not only by the *Profession* of the same Faith and Religion (all the Members of the *Catholick* and *Universal* Church are thus united) but in the *participation* of the same Ordinances, Administrations, and instituted worship of Christ, in a *particular* place, where there is fitting opportunity of executing, and yielding due observance to Rules of *Joynt-Communion*; which is not a thing possible for the *Universal* Church, *now*, through *numerosity* and *multitude*; though once it was, viz: when the whole *Catholick-Christian* Church consisted of about but 126. Members in all, Act. 1. 15. Now

This *Communion* may admit of a twofold *breach*, viz. 1. *Schism* in the Church, 2. *Separation* from the Church (as the breach in the Church-*Catholick* before): The first is a breach either 1. in point of *Judgement* and *Opinion*; or 2. in point of *Charity* and Christian *Affection*, (the too too frequent issue and result of the other) 'tis chiefely the former (I presume) that Sr. *Augustine* calls *Dissidium Congregationis*, *Church-dissention*; the latter he

he calls *Odium Fraternum*, *Brother-hatred* and *disaffection*; both sad *Church-Rents*: What, when *Lot* and *Abrahams* (*Brethren*) are at *strife*! when *Brethren fall out by the way!*

Separation from the Church, is either

1. *Partial.* 2. *Total.*
1. *Negative.* 2. *Positive.*

1. A *Partial Separation*; when we decline Communion with the Church in some Ordinances, but joyn with her in others; as in *Prayer*, but not in *hearing* of the *Word*, or in both those, but not in the *Sacrament*. 2. A *Total Separation* is an *Universal* declension of Communion with a Church in every Ordinance.

1. *Negative Separation*; when we withdraw from Communion with some Church, not joyning with any other, but continuing in hopes and expectation of the happy amendment of that Church from which we withdraw, with a purpose of *returning* to her when reformed. 2 *Positive Separation*, when we do not only decline Communion with a Church, but divide into several *Parties*, *Combinations*, and new *Conventions*, as (probably) 'twas amongst the *Corinthians*; One saying *I am of Paul*; another, *I am of Apollo*; a third, *I am of Cephas*, *&c.* (1 *Cor.* 1. 12.) embodying in several Church-wayes, setting up *Altar* against *Altar*, and *Threshold* against *Threshold*.

Separation from the Church, may be *Culpable* or *Inculpable*, *Lawful* or *Unlawful* (and that more or lesse) according to its *Grounds* and *Causes*: Now the only lawfull Grounds or Causes of a *Total-Positive Separation*, are usually reckoned three, *viz.*

1. *Intolerable Persecution* from Persons.
2. *Damnable Heresie* in poynt of Doctrine.
3. *Grosse Idolatry* in poynt of Worship.

These are the Grounds of our just *Departure* from the *Tyrannical*, *Heretical*, *Idololatrical*, Church of *Rome*: O happy *Divorce*! may the Lord perpetuate it! that we

may

Isa. 8. 12. may never *say a Confederacy* to her again, but upon Gods own *Terms of Accommodation*, —— *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them*, Jer. 15. 19. Again, when the *Corruptions* of a Church are such, as that one cannot communicate with her *without sin* unavoydably; That seems to me, to be a just ground, though not of *Positive*, yet of *Negative*, though not of *Total*, yet of *Partial*, *Separation*; and *Non-Communion* in such a case, can be no *sin*, therefore no *Schism*. How can *Non-Communion* be *sin*, there, where one cannot communicate *without sin*? unless men will *impose* or suffer to be *imposed* upon themselves, a *Necessity of sinning*; that which true *Piety* abhorrs. I am not alone here, or without the suffrage of the sober-Learned, (a sufficient protection against the brand of *Novelty*) who say that if a Church be either no *true Church*, or so extreamly *corrupted*, that a good Christian cannot hold *Communion* with it, *without sin*; *Separation* in that case is no *Schism*; but they are the *Schismaticks* that give the *Cause* of that Separation: Then let the VVorld Judge who in *England* may most deservedly be branded for *Schismaticks*.

See Dr. *Cawdrey*, in his Treatise Entituled, *Independency a great Schism.*

On the Contrary, *Culpable*, *Faulty*, and *sinful Separation* from the Church (the *Schism* in question) is (as I think it is generally described) *a Causeless Separation from Communion with, and participation of Christs instituted Worship in, a true Church.*

Sir, This premised, we shall easily discover what *Church-breach*, *Schism*, or *Separation*, it is, that *Mr. Crofton* chargeth upon those in the Church of *England*, (and amongst those my self) who under the present Providence (though they joyn with her in the *Instituted* VVorship, and Substantial Ordinances of Jesus Christ, therein administred by, as *Prayer*, *Hearing of the Word Preached*, *Singing of Psalms*, &c. yet) do not, cannot, communicate with her, in her *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer*; as being guilty of a *sinful Practice*, &c.

1. T'is

1. 'Tis not a *breach* of the first *Vnion*, viz. That wherein the *Elect*, Gods *Chosen* Ones, are by a *true Faith* or the *Spirit* of Faith *un-interruptedly* indwelling in them, conjoyned one with another, and all of them with their *Publick Head*, Christ; for this (as is declared) is an utter *Impossibility*; which none but an *Arminian* Spirit will deny.

2. 'Tis not a *Breach* of *Communion* with the *Catholick-Visible* Church, and her *Common Head*, Christ, by vertue of *Outward Profession*, (which is called a *Catholick* and *Universal Separation*); for this were not only *Schism* but *Apostacy*, (as hath been said) not only a *Breach* of *Church-Vnity* but a *Voluntary forfeiture* of a *Church-State*; an Imputation which my *Creed* will acquit me from; while I professedly own the true Catholick Doctrine of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, *the Orthodox Fathers*, *Councels*, *Confessors*, *Martyrs* in all Ages, and the *Reformed* Churches.

3. 'Tis not a *Breach in* the Church; either, 1. in poynt of *Judgment* and *Opinion*; nor 2. in poynt of *Charity* and *Affection*. 1. Not in poynt of *Judgment* and *Opinion*; for, as for *Erroneous* Principles, according to that light God hath given me, I abhor them: *Church-rending Divisions*, I shall not willingly or wittingly be accessory to; never forgeting (what *Luther* said of *Caspar Schwenckfield*) that *Church-Incendiaries* may kindle a fire here, which may burn themselves to all eternity, hereafter; But if a *Dissent* in *Judgment* about matters of *Worship* or *Discipline* (yea and (perchance) in *Doctrinal* poynts too, at least *Non-Fundamentals*) from our present *Church-Pilots*, be a *Schism*, I shall not busie my self about either Vindication or Excuse, under the Censure; but sure I am, either Mr. *Crofton* himself is in this sense a *Schismatick*, or else justly may he be branded for an *Apostate*. 2. Not in poynt of *Charity* and *Christian Affection*: Mr. *Crofton* is no competent Arbitrator in that case; God himself is best

best able to judge, who at this day *walks charitably*, who not: for my own part, I have Charity for all *Church-Members*, (understand their *Persons*, not their *Corruptions*); The Law of *Piety*, and the Law of *Charity* God himself hath married together, and *whom God hath joyned, let no man separate.*

4. The *Breach* or *Schism* (then) charged, must be a *Separation* from the Church of *England*; not 1. *Total*, since I communicate with her in those Parts of Christs instituted Worship and Ordinances, *Prayer*, *Hearing*, &c. Nor 2. *Positive*, whilst I turn not *Conventicler*, and embody not into a *Party* or *Convention* set up against her, *Altar* against *Altar*, *Threshold* against *Threshold*, &c. But 1. *Partial*, and 2. *Negative*, viz: meer *Non-Communion* with her in her *Liturgy* or stinted and *Set-Forms* of *Common-Prayer*. This is the *Schism* and *Separation* charged, This is the *Crime* and great *Article of Endictment*. What, and is Mr. *Crofton* turned *Accuser of the Brethren?*

Sir, Two Things I equally dislike, *Separation* on the one hand, and *Superstition* on the other, (and what sober Christian will not?) they being destructive, the one to the *Vnity*, the other to the *Purity* of the Church) and the latter not more than the former, (understand I pray you *sinfull Separaiotn*); *Schism* in the *Church*, is a *Rent* and *Wound* in Christs *Body*, a *Crucifying afresh of the Son of God:* The *Schismatical* Rendings of the Church by *Anabaptists*, and such like Fanaticks in *Germany*, cost Zealous *Luther* no little grief and lamentation. God forgive those who are known to have been too too guilty of such *Sectarian-Cruelty* here at home: *Is Christ divided?* was a sad *Interrogatory*: What, Christ *wounded in the house of* his *friends!* that's sad! The *Voluntary Rending* of *Christ-Mystical* is a sin, nothing inferiour (in my mind) to that of the *Jews Crucifying* of *Christ Personal*,

1 Cor. 1. 13.
Zech. 13. 6.

nal, forasmuch as that it reacheth both Head and Members.

That then which inclineth me to this attempt is, not Conscíousnesse to my self of any *Schisme* or (*sinfull*) *Separation* (though I perceive you are ready to espouse mine Accusers quarrel in case of non-satisfaction to your enforced request) but the prevalent sense as well of your *importunity*, as of mine own *innocency*.

This *Epistle* (possibly) may seem to be with the City of *Myndus*, lyable to upbraiding, the Porch being too big, but neither is the premised Introduction larger, nor the subsequent discourse more brief, than (I judged) expedient.

Mr. *Croftons* Grounds and Reasons, urged for *Communion* with the Church of *England* in all Acts of worship (and consequently in *Common-Prayer*) therein administred by; and against *Separation* or withdrawment from the same; are all reduced to four *Positions*, or *Argumentative Propositions*; from which (*Premises*) he infers, partly the *Lawfulness*, partly the *Expediency*, and partly the indispensable *Necessity* of the former, as the *sinfulnesse* and *unwarrantablenesse*, (the *Schisme*) of the latter: And those *Positions* he calls CONSIDERATIONS, which come now to be *considered*.

CONSID. 1. *Communion with the Church-Visible in all the Acts* (I had rather say *Parts*) *of Solemn Publique Worship, is an Essential part of the sanctification of the Sabbath, or Lords day, and positive indispensable duty of every particular soul, called by the name of God*, to be onely *superseded* by a *reall inevitable necessity*, with assurance to any, that *God will have mercy, and not sacrifice*. This is the *Major-Proposition* of Mr. *Croftons* great *Doom-Argument*. The *Assumption* must be this. Page 4.

But Communion with the Church of England in her Liturgy or Common-Prayer (commonly called, *Divine Ser-*

vice) is Communion with the Church-Visible, in Solemn and Publique Worship: and then the Conclusion must be,

Therefore Communion with the Church of England in her Liturgy and Common-Prayer, is an Essential part of the sanctification of the Sabbath, or Lords day, and a positive indispensable duty, &c. and by consequence *Non-Communion*, &c. must be a breach of duty, and therefore, a *sin*, viz: *SCHISM*.

REMONS. *Honoured Friend*, My Answer to this, shall be threefold. Viz:

1. By way of *Concession*.
2. By way of *Distinction*.
3. By way of *Retortion*.

1. By way of *Concession*.

That the Church of *England* (That is the *Community of Christians in this Nation, concorporated by Baptism, professing the true God and Jesus Christ, and subjected to the Word and Sacraments*, &c.) is a *true Church*, cannot in justice be denyed; Her *Primitive Constitution* being by History (*Times Index*, and our best *Intelligencer* touching Antiquity) known to have been *Apostolical*, administers to me no occasion of doubt in the thing: But whoever were the *Seminary Founders* thereof, (whether *Simon Zelotes*, or *Joseph* of *Arimathea* (Christs *Immediate Emissaries*) or *Aristobolus*, or *Augustine* the *Monk*,) 'tis no matter of Faith; only let none *despise his Birth-right*, as *Esau* did his. O what a happiness is it that our *Native* Land should be a (thus) *Consecrated Soil*; and that we should be by *birth* (in this respect) *Sons of the Church*, (*Visible Church Members*:) The Inroades of *Popery* into this *Iland*, since the *Sun of Righteousnesse* first *rose* herein, have been both various and violent, (and what they may further be, God knows) but God hath safe-kept his *English-Ark* in the midst of that *Deluge*; the *Rock of Ages*, hath hitherto been her *Ararat*; By no *Antichristian Inundations*, was she

ſhe ever as yet (totally) overwhelmed; *Popery* ſpoiled her *Beauty*, but did not deſtroy her *Being*.

Mr. *Crofton* turning *Confeſſor*, hath acknowledged this Churches (*preſent*) *Corruptions* as well in *Things* (viz: *Worſhip* and *Ordinances* therein adminiſtrable by) as in *Perſons*, both *Miniſters* and *People*, *Viſible Members*, (the *Integral* Parts thereof): But a *True* Church is one thing, a *Pure* Church another; Here is the *New-Creature*, Hereafter (onely) the *Pure-Creature*. Now the queſtion is not about *Church-purity*, (alas! *Adulterate Mixtures* and *Innovations* in the *Worſhip* of God, are a too too plain confutation of this *now*) but *Church-Entity*, the *Truth* and *Being* of the Church, (which our *Engliſh Donatiſts* (Mr. *Crofton* may know whom I mean) having (formerly) well nigh confounded, did (like their *Progenitors*) moſt ſacriledgiouſly *monopolize* the Church of Chriſt in this Nation, confining the *Formality* (and therefore the *Truth* and very *Eſſence*) of a Church, within the narrow compaſſe of their *Confederate* Members, as if it had not been poſſible, for their *Ark* to contain a *Cham*, or for *Tares* to grow within their *Incloſure*; (God will I hope, humble them for it). *Truth*, we muſt needs aſcribe to the Church of *England*, while She profeſſedly owns the *Faith* of Chriſt, and the *True Religion*: For the *Truth* of Religion proves the *Entity* (or *Being*), as the *Power* of Religion the *Purity* of a Church: while She *owns* the *Head*, ſhe muſt not be *diſowned* for a Part of the *Body* (the Church *Catholick-Viſible*); while She *ſeparates* not from *Chriſt*, we have no warrant (*totally* and *poſitively*) to *ſeparate* from *Her*: She may be Chriſts *Spouſe* (viz: *Viſibly* and *Profeſſedly*) though not a *Chaſt-Virgin*-Spouſe; a *Wife*, though an *Adultereſſe*; retaining her *Affinity*, though not her *Virginity*. *Corruptions* in the Church are either

1. *Perſonal.* or 2. *Real.*

Real, again, either 1. *Substantial* and *Intrinsecal*.
or 2. *Circumstantial* and *Extrinsecal*.

The latter is Mr. *Croftons* own distinction (though possibly he and I may differ in the application of it).

Personal Corruptions in *Scandalous Professors*, or *Visible* Church-*Members*, (*Ministers* (as well as others) the *Hophnie's* and *Phinehas's* of our age) *defile* a Church: *Corruptions Objective* and *Real*, though onely *Circumstantial* and *Extrinsecal*, (in *Outward Rites* and *Ceremonies*, or corrupt *Modes* and *Methods* of Administration, as the *Antiquated Jewish Vestments*, *Crosse* in Baptisme, *Kneeling* at the *Supper*, &c.) *adulterate* a Church. *Corruptions Substantial* and *Intrinsecal* (which are *Church-wasting* Corruptions; the very *Vitals* and *Intrinsecals* of Religion, being by them destroyed) do (*ipso facto*,) actually *divorce* a Church from Christ; those are the steps of Church-Apostacy, when the *Wife* becomes a *Lewd-Woman*; (*Single Fornication* in the first; *Adultery* in the second; A *Bill of Divorce* in the last:) The Church of *England* is too truly chargeable with the two first, but not with the last, as is the Church of *Rome*, she having not (as yet, I pray God she never may) with her degenerated from a *Christian Church*, into an *Antichristian See*; nor her Members with *hers*, from *Professors* to *Persecutors* of the Faith, not *holding the True Head*, but setting up ANOTHER NAME; being in *Doctrine* (damnably) *Heretical*; in *Worship* (grossely) *Idolatrous*; in both *Antichristian*. The *Essentials Constitutive* of a *True Church*, are 1. the *Head*; 2. the *Body*; 3. the *Union* that is between them: which three concurring in the Church of *England*; *Christ* being her professed *Head*, she being Christs professed *Body*, and the *Catholick-Faith* being the *Union-Bond* whereby they are coupled together; She cannot in justice be denyed to be a *True* (though the Lord knows, far from a *Pure*) Church. *Vid.* Jun. *lib. de Ecclesia.* Herein I agree with Mr. *Crofton*.

2. By

2. By way of *Distinction*.

Two things are here to be distinguished; *viz.*

1. *Communion with the Church-Visible.*
2. *Solemn and Publick Worship.*

1. There is a twofold *Communion*; *viz.*

One by *Profession.*

Another by *Participation.*

1. *Church-Communion* by way of Common *Profession* of the same true Religion, Faith, Doctrine, and instituted worship of Christ, (by vertue whereof all the Members of the Church-*Catholick Visible* throughout the World, are concorporated and embodyed, one with another, and all of them with Christ as a *Publick Head*, *Catholick Faith* being the ground of *Catholick Communion*, the main *Ligament* of the great *Body Mystical*) is not only a *Duty*, but a *Priviledge* too, indispensably necessary to salvation. *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*, is a severe *Maxim* not more known then true; no *Salvation* (ordinarily) without the *Churches Line of Communication.* The *Church* is Gods *Inclosure*, (*Cant.* 9. 12.) his *Nursery* planted with the *Trees of Righteousnesse*; without whose *Pale* and *Boundaries* all that *die* doe *perish*: Ah, *my Dear Friend*, Let me rather be a *Myrtle* in the *Vineyard*, then a *Cedar* in the *Forrest.* 'Twere better *England* should be *unpeopled* then *unchurched*: A *Church-lesse* People is a *Christ-lesse* People; and if *Christ-lesse* then *Hope-lesse*, Ephes. 2. 12. *Christ is the Head of the Body the Church*, Coll. 1. 18. No *Union* with this *Head* without *Communion* with this *Body*: Christ must be *professed*, or (else) never *possessed*; no *Saint-State* without a *Church-State*; no Call by the *Spirit* without a Call by the *Word* first; so that no *Word*, no *Life*: — *Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be* Rom. 10. 13, 14 *saved*; — *Worship* is necessary to *Salvation*: — *How shall they call on him, in whom they have not beleeved? Faith* is necessary to *Worship*: — *How shall they beleeve in him, of whom they have not heard? Hearing* is necessary

to

to *Faith*: — *How shall they hear without a Preacher?* *Preaching* is necessary to *Hearing*: so that, without *Worship* there is no *Salvation*; without *Faith*, no (true) *Worship*; without *Hearing*, no *Faith*; and without *Preaching* no *Hearing*; therefore (*a primo ad ultimum*) the *Word preached* is necessary to *Salvation*; — no *Word*, no *Life*; (ah! may this (loathed) *Manna* never fail from amidst our *Brittish-Israel!*) Thrice miserable are they whose *Sun sets*, where the *Sun of Righteousnesse* never *rose*, — *with healing in his Wings*. *Solomon* (the great *Sophi* of the World) hath long agoe read the Destinie of such; *Where there is no Vision, the people perish*, Prov. 29. 18. a sad *Exit!* There is *Visio Salvifica* in the Church Militant, as well as *Visio Beatifica*, in the Triumphant: There be no true *Saints* who are not (in this sense) *SEERS*. This is the first *Communion*, wherein I am chargeable with no *Breach*, while I professe my self a *Christian*: All *Professors* throughout the VVorld, are in this respect *Communicants*.

Exeunt pere-grini.

2. *Communion* with the Church *Visible*, by way of *Participation*, or actual *Enjoyment* of the Ordinances, and celebration of the instituted Worship of Christ in a particular place (the *Communion* in question) is (I grant) a *Duty* obliegeing *semper*, but not *ad semper*: To explaine my self; A *Particular* Church (such as is the Church of *England*) having her rise (as such) not from a *Common* Call by the *Word* onely, (for the *Catholick-Visible* Church hath her rise from that) but from a *Particular Providential* Call, (for so I may term it) whereby Persons (whether *Natives* or *Forreigners*), are called to inhabit, reside, or live, there, where there is fit *Opportunity* of enjoying the Publique Ordinances, and celebrating the instituted Worship of Christ by way of *Social-Joynt-Communion*; as *Providence*, *Opportunity*, or *necessary Occasions*, shall vary, the *Obligation* to *Joynt-Communion* must vary also. Mr. *Crofton* cannot deny that there may be many Members of the *Universal-*

verſal Catholick, who (yet) never had opportunity of aſſociating themſelves with, or of *Joynt-Communion* in the *Solemn Publique Worſhip* he ſpeaks of, in a *Particular* Church; and many have had it, who have been deprived of it, as *Merchants* and *Marriners*, profeſſing the true Religion, who in purſuance of their Secular Callings, are diſtanced from a true *Conſtituted* Church, ſome of them living in *Spaine*, others in *India*, others in *Turky*, &c. or ſuch as through *ſickneſs* are kept from the Enjoyment of Publick Ordinances, *&c.* We cannot ſay that *Communion* with a *Particular* Church, in ſuch Perſons under that providence is an *Indiſpenſable duty*, or *Non-Communion*, *Schiſm*, unleſs we alſo ſay (which were very hard) that they are bound to an *Impoſſibility*; *Providence* gives a *Diſpenſation* (as it were) in caſe of *Neceſſary* and *Inevitable Non-Communion*: In a word, Where *Opportunity* is ſerving, *Violence* not obſtructing, *Corruptions* not barring, no *Neceſſity* hindering, there *Joynt-Communion* in *Solemn Publique Worſhip* is an *Indiſpenſable duty*; otherwiſe, That which gives a *Call*, gives alſo a *Diſcharge*, viz: *Providence*.

Thoſe that diſclaim all *Church-Fellowſhip* out of a peeviſh petulancy, ſlighting all opportunities thereof, are juſtly to be diſclaimed as *Self-out-lawed*; ſuch as the *Vagrant Seekers*, &c. led by the *Ignis Fatuus*, the *wild-fire* of their own deluded Fancy: Surely *Communion of Saints* is no Article of their *Creed*, the maintaining of which ſhould be in our reſpective Capacities, every ones endeavour. But to proceed.

Sir, I own an Obligation lying upon me, whereby I am bound to communicate with the Church of *England* (whereof I profeſſe my ſelf a Member) ſhe being (as is acknowledged) a *True* Church (notwithſtanding her many *Corruptions*,) in theſe Parts of Gods *Real-Solemn*, *Publick Worſhip*, wherein *Violent Impoſitions*, *Prevalent Corruptions*, or ſome or other *Inevitable barrs* neceſſitate not a *withdrawment* and *Non-Communion*; and if I ſhould

not,

not, I ſhould greatly ſin. But what does this make for *Communion* with her in her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*? Yes, (ſayes Mr. *Crofton*) 'Tis an Act of *Solemn Publick Worſhip*, &c. and therefore matter of duty: That is (next) to be tryed.

The Second Thing to be diſtinguiſhed, is, *Solemn Publick Worſhip*.

Religious *Worſhip* may be ſaid to be *Solemn* and *Publick* in reſpect of a threefold *Community* or *Solemnity*: viz:

1. *Perſonal*, In reſpect of *Perſons* worſhipping.
2. *Local*, In reſpect of the *Place* of worſhip.
3. *Real*, In reſpect of the *Matter* and *Conſtitution* of worſhip.

1. That *Worſhip* which is celebrated by a *Plurality* or *Society* of Perſons, whereſoever convented, is *Solemn* and *Publique* in reſpect of *Perſons*; now our *Engliſh Liturgy-Service* may (I confeſs) in this reſpect paſſe for Worſhip *Solemn* and *Publique*, and ſo may the *Popiſh-Maſſe-Service* too.

2. That *Worſhip* (properly) is in reſpect of *Place*, *Solemn* and *Publick*; the particular *Place* whereof, as well as the *Worſhip* it ſelf is *appointed* of God: Now the *Jewiſh Worſhip* celebrated in the *Temple* & *Tabernacle*, was in this reſpect (as ſhall appear by and by) the onely *Solemn* and *Publique Worſhip* in the world.

3. That *Worſhip*, whereof *God* is the *Author* as well as the *Object*; the *Word*, the *Rule*, as well as the *Matter*; The *Catholick-Doctrine* of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*; That *Worſhip* which *Chriſt* Himſelf (the Churches *Lord-Regent* and *Law-giver*) did *appoint* and *inſtitute*; which the *Apoſtles* (His *Seminary Diſciples*) did, by vertue of Authority derived from Him, *commend* and *command*; which the *Goſpel* (the *Chriſtian* Churches *Directory*) doth *Licence* and *Warrant*; which hath been by a *Continued Series* and *Succeſſion* of Chriſtian Profeſſors (*Faiths Defenders*) from *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, *uninterruptedly* maintained, and at length,

length through the Current of *Sixteen hundred* years, happily (as to *Substance* at least) transmitted and conveyed to us, is in respect of *Matter*, *Authentique Constitution*, and *Reality*, the onely *Solemn Publique Divine Worship* in the Christian world. Now to apply.

1. *Communion* with the *Church-Visible* in that *Worship*, which is in respect of *Matter* and *Authentique Constitution*, *Solemn* and *Publique*, namely, That which was instituted by *Christ* Himself, the Churches *Publique Head*; preached and prest by the *Apostles*, the Churches *Publique Guides*; recorded (as the onely *Evangelical Worship*) in the *Gospel*, the Churches *Publique Rule*; and (in conformity to this Rule) observed and performed by the *Primitive* Christians for the first *two hundred* years, the purest Ages of the Christian Church, This and all other Churches *Publique Example*; is (I readily grant) an *Essential Part of the Sanctification of the Lords Day*, and a *Positive indispensable duty*, to be upon perill *superseded* or *intermitted*, upon no less Warrant or Authority then that which imposed it, (with this assurance *that God will have mercy, and not sacrifice*); In Conscience whereof, I own my self oblieged to joyn with some *Society* in a *Particular* (*True*) Church (a Part of the Church *Catholick-Visible*) while *opportunity* serves, and no *Real Incvitable Obstruction* hinders, in all the Parts of *Real-Solemn-Publique* Worship (*Prayer*, *Praise*, the *Word*, the *Supper*) wherein no *Violent Impositions*, nor any *Real Impediment* may bar but that I *may* communicate, nor *Prevalent Corruptions* necessitate a declension or withdrawment, but that I may *without sin*. As *Saint-Communion* is matter of *Faith* (τὸ πιστὸν) so *Joynt-Communion* is (*Cæteris Paribus*) matter of *Duty* (τὸ πρακτὸν); That which all the Professed Members of this *Spiritual Corporation* (the *Church*) are bound in their respective Capacities to maintain: *Church-Unity* and *Uniformity* should be the *Joynt*-endeavour of all, but so as that the *purity*

of the Church be also endeavoured, and (much more that) her *Truth* and *Being*, be not destroyed. I am no *Divinorum Desertor Castrorum* (as St. *Ambrose* describes a (real) *Separatist*) no *Camp-Fugitive* or *Assembly-Forsaker*; no, God knows I detest and disown the Principles and Practises of such as (wilfully and willingly, unnecessarily and peevishly) *forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some* (too too many in these late times) hath been in all Ages. There is a twofold *Christian Scope*; one *Primary*, viz. *Gods Glory*; the other *Subordinate*, viz. the Christians *Own Good*. The *Glory* of God is or ought to be by a *Gospel-Law* (1 *Cor.* 10. 31.) the *Terminus Reductivus* of all our actions: To *glorifie* God is a *Natural* debt, due from the *Man* as well as from the *Christian*, and from an *Angel* as well as from a *Man*; the whole Host of Heaven are Gods *Tributaries* herein. The Christians own *Happinesse* is to be pursued next and in subordination to this. Now, neither is the *Crown-Revenue* of Heaven so much inhaunced, nor the *Catholick* Benefit of Christians so much advanced, by *Solitary Worship*, as by the *Joynt-Services* of Professors. 'Tis well worthy of our Observation, That Christ gave that *Portion* and *Measure* of his *Spirit* to his Disciples when *assembled*, which he never gave them whilst *apart*, (the richest *Donative* that ever he bestowed upon the Sons of Men!) *Act.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. great encouragement to Saints *Joynt-Communion*! *Vis unita fortior.* Now

2. This *Real-Solemn* Worship and Indispensable *Joynt-Communion* therein, is not confined to any one Particular place more then to another, under the *Gospel*; not to *Rome*, more then to *England*, nor to a *Cathedral* more then to any other *Church*; nor to any *Church* or *Chappel*, or any such *Fabrick* and *Structure* in the World, more then to the *open Fields*; nor to a *Publique*, more then to a *Private* house, in it self: The house of an *Obed-Edom* may receive this *Ark*: The Churches *Chamber-Worship*

(Act.

(Act. 1. 15.) was true *Solemn Worship*. My Friend, meer Conſcience of the Truth conſtrains me to ſpeak: They miſerably erre, who reſtrict the *truth* and *reality* of *Solemn* Worſhip to a *Publique* place, a material *Church* and *Structure* (which yet none that I know, but a few peeviſh *Sectaries* can diſlike) as if *Locality*, which is but a meer *natural* Circumſtance, were *Intrinſecal* or *Eſſential* to *Goſpel Worſhip*: And what if thoſe *Places* ſhould chance in proceſſe of time to become the Receptacles of *Jewiſh*, *Popiſh*, *Idolatry*? where would their *Solemn* and *Publique Worſhip* then be? But (more *Argumentatively*) where were *Material Temples* or *Churches* in the dayes of the Apoſtles (other then that of *Jeruſalem*, and the *Jewiſh Synagogues*)? where were they for the *firſt hundred* and *fifty* years after Chriſt? when Chriſtians did celebrate their worſhip in κοιμητήρια, in the *Burial Places* of *Martyrs*, (whence (probably) 'twas that their places of Aſſembly were called *Martyria*, and the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, *Martyrium magnum*); and this was the reaſon why *Perſecuting Emperors* made it their firſt buſineſſe and care to barr and baniſh the Chriſtians from thoſe places: yea, * *Tertullian* tells us, that in his dayes (*viz.* about *two hundred* and *ſixty* years after Chriſt) the Chriſtians had no other *Meeting-places* (Churches) then *ſimplices domos*, poor deſpicable Cottages, which were (ſaith he) *antris & latebris quam Templis ſimiliores*, more like unto Caves, or Corners, then Churches: And 'tis probable, that there was not a *Material* Chriſtian *Church*, till about or after the times of *Evariſtus* and *Dyoniſius*, Biſhops of *Rome*, well nigh *three hundred* years after the birth of Chriſt; *Parochial Diſtributions* being begun by the one, and furthered by the other. *Sir*, you may pleaſe to conſult * *Polidor Vergilius* and † *Hoſpinian* (both expert and learned *Antiquaries*) in the caſe. Now, were Chriſtians all that time, becauſe not *Templers*, therefore no true *Worſhippers*? Was there no *Solemn Publique* Worſhip performed

* *Lib. cont. Valent.*

* *De Rer. Inuent.* lib. 4. c. 9. lib. 5. c. 6.
† *De Orig. Temp.* c. 6.

formed for so many *hundred* years (the purest Ages of the Christian Church)? But further; When I read of St. *Paul Sermoning*, of *Lydia converted*, and of *Prayer wont to be made* by a *River-side*, (Act. 16. 13, 14.) Of St. *Paul* a private *House-Preacher eighteen moneths*, and that in a house adjoyning to a Synagogue (*Basils* προσευχην) Act. 18. 7. 11.) Of St. *Paul* and his Followers, their *Chamber-Communion* in the *Word*, the *Supper*, (doubtless there was *Prayer* there too, Act. 20. 7, 8.) When I read of the whole *Catholick* Christian Church (a *Conventicle* consisting of about 120 Persons) convented & worshipping in a *private room* (Act. 1. 15.) I am sufficiently warranted severely to condemn all such as limit *Solemn Worship* to any *Particular place*, as if its *Solemnity* consisted in its *Locality*.

The *Jewish Worship* was the onely *Worship* that ever could be called *Solemn* and *Publique* in respect of *Place*; for *God* himself (not *Men* like our selves) determined upon the *Place* as well as the *Matter* and *Manner* of his worship in the *Jewish*, which he did not in the *Christian* Church; the *Jewish Sacrifices* and *Oblations* being limited first to the *Tabernacle*, and after that to the *Temple*; the former whereof was built according to Gods own *Instructions* and *Plat-form*, namely, the *Pattern shewed to Moses* upon the *Mount*; the latter was Gods own *Choice* (Deut. 12. 5. 11. 1 *King.* 8. 29. 2 Chron. 7. 12.) by *Solomon* through *Divine Instinct dedicated* to him, and by a miraculous Signal of favour and acceptance (2 Chron. 5. 13, 14.) *owned* by him; and thus 'twas said, *In Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship*, John 4. 20. So that the *Place* of worship, was indeed a *Part* of worship, not onely a *Circumstance*, but of the *Substance* of worship, amongst the *Jews*; God having stampt *Sanctity* and *Sacred Solemnity* thereupon, (Mr. * *Crofton* himself bearing me witnesse.) But under the *Gospel*, and in the *Christian* Church, *Locality* is a meer matter of *Indifferency*; *Local Liberty* being a great part

* *Altar Worship.* page 77.

of

of *Evangelical Liberty*, Mal. 1. 11. Mat. 18. 20. John 4. 21, 24. Act. 10. 35. 1 Tim. 2. 8. Christ having *Ore & Corpore*, both as *Man*, and as *Prophet*, by his *Preaching*, as well as by his *Coming* abolished *Sanctity* and *Peculiarity* (as of *Time*, so) of *Place*; the *Typical Use* of *Temple* and *Tabernacle* ceasing in him as *Antitype*, and *Local Liberty* being preached by him as *Prophet*, John 4. 21. Insomuch that *Two or Three* (whersoever) met in his *Name*, have the Solemn promise of his *presence* (now) Mat. 18. 20.) whereas if the *Solemnity* of his worship were tied to any one place, his *presence* and the *Concomitant blessing* of his worship should be tied to that place also. Who would have thought that * *Bellarmine* that great Light of the *Romish* Firmament, (the chief *Atlas* of that *Orbe*) should have been so much in the dark, as to think that, *Prayer*, or (any other part of worship, performed in a *Material Church*, &c. is of more *Efficacy*, then if it were celebrated elsewhere? as if Stone and Timber did contribute vertue to our devotion; or *Prayers Efficacy* depended on *Locality*! I wish there be not many *Bellarmines* in this respect, foolish *Superstionaries*! that cry, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord*, &c. like their silly, blind *Pharisaical* Progenitors. But *Sir*, You and I are taught of God, assured by *Holy Record*, that *Prayer*, or any other part of *Divine Worship*, in what place soever performed, will be accepted of God, through Christ, so he be but worshipped according to his own *Canon*, viz. —*In Spirit, and in Truth*, John 4. 24. Let none then presently conclude from a necessary declension of *Local Society* in a *Publique place*, a breach of *Real Community* in *True Solemn Publique Worship*, which may (indeed) be maintained in any place indifferently. Yet

* Vid. lib. 3. *De Cultu Sanctorum.*

Jer. 7. 4.

3. The Church of *England* (while she *holds the Head* (Christ) and professeth the *True Religion*,) being a *True* Church (a Part of the Church *Catholick-Visible*) as is acknowledged: and a *Publique Place*, being dictated by the light

light of nature, and judged by men (to whose *Prudential Determination* the *Conveniency* or *Inconveniency* of *Place* of worſhip, as a *Natural* Circumſtance, is left, though it be a meer matter of *Indifferency* under the *Goſpel*, and in it *ſelf*) to be fitteſt for *Publique Joynt-Communion*, and therefore (though not *ſanctified*) yet prudentially *ſequeſtred* and devoted thereunto; I muſt needs own my ſelf called to communicate (and in anſwer to that call I do communicate) with *her*, and that, in the Place of *Publique Aſſembly*, in all the Parts of *Real-Solemn Divine* Worſhip, wherein I may without either *let* or *ſin*. And thus *Sir*, 'tis my known Practice (which you are no ſtranger to) to joyn with the preſent Aſſemblies in *Prayer*, (though not their *Common-Prayer*) *Praiſe*, or *Singing of Pſalms*, *Hearing of the Word*, all which are Subſtantial parts of *True Solemn Divine Worſhip*; what? and yet a *Separatiſt*? Judge how little I deſerve that name, while this is my practice, and I exhort you and others to the like; Onely give me leave to tell you, that what was Reverend *Beda's* advice to him that ſhould chance to *read* the Books of that Heretical Biſhop *Julian*, I deſire (and it may be ſo will you) to improve in the *hearing* of ours,— *Ita carpat botrum ut ſpinam caveat*, Take of the *Cluſter*, but beware of *Prickles*, be ſure they be of *Canaans* Grapes; I would not willingly be *ſtarved*, but God keep me from being *poyſoned*; Take heed of *Choaking*, *chew* before you *ſwallow*; a *Proſelyting Romaniſt* (a *Seminary Prieſt*) will tell you otherwiſe; once ſwallow *his* Churches *Infallibility*, and any thing will go down then; there is no room left for diſpute more, no need of the true *Ballance of the Sanctuary*. But I have not as yet laid finger upon the ſoar; therefore conſider,

4. That the Church of *Englands Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* (the great apple of *ſtrife*, &c.) is a Part of this *Real-Solemn* worſhip of God, and that *Communion* with her therein (the thing urged) is (therefore) a *Poſitive Indiſ-*

penſable

penſable duty, I muſt take leave (at leaſt till I ſee more cogent Arguments for it then have as yet been pleaded by the beſt that ever undertook the patronage of it) utterly to *deny*. This I know would ſeem ſtrange to many, (what, a *Convocation-Maſter-piece*! the *Summum quod ſic* of the *Wit of men and Angels*! the *Monopoly* of *Divine Service*! the *Prayers of the Church*! &c. and yet no Part of *True Solemn Worſhip*!) but that it is written for private ſatisfaction, and by way of private Apology. Sir, 'tis a fixed Principle with me, which I ſhould not fear to publiſh to the world, (had my tongue the liberty of mine Accuſers in the caſe, *viz.*) That there is no *True Divine Worſhip* whereof *God* is not the *Author* as well as the *Object*, the *Alpha* as well as the *Omega*: What is not *Inſtituted* Worſhip, is none of *His* Worſhip, but meer *Will-Worſhip*, for God will be worſhipped *De ſuo*, his Soul loathing all that *Service* (though (poſſibly) nick-named *Divine*,) wherein there is more of the *Creature*, than of *Himſelfe*, (more of *Man* than of *God*); What Reaſon either from *Scripture* or *Common Light*, can perſwade me otherwiſe? Now, can Mr. *Crofton* ſay *Bona fide* ('tis not a matter to be dallied withal) that *Liturgies* or *ſtinted* & *Set-Forms* of Prayer, were ever *Inſtituted* by *Chriſt*, *Practiſed* by the *Apoſtles*, *Intended* in the *Goſpel*, or obſerved by the *Primitive Chriſtian* Church, in the beſt and pureſt ages after Chriſt, (whoſe *Practice* in the caſe was to be a *Leading Caſe* and an *Imitable Example* to all ſucceeding Churches) In a word, Can he prove *Englands Common-Prayer* part of Chriſts *Inſtituted Worſhip*? Let him produce *Authentick* (either) *Precept* or *Preſident* for it, (which will be a hard matter for him to do) elſe furceaſe his cenſure; for what other can it be then a meer *Humane Ordinance*, *Super-erogatory Worſhip*, *Arbitrary Service*, even *Scripture-bitten Will-Worſhip*, one of the (juſtly condemned) *Commandements and Ordinances of men*, Col. 2. 22, 23. What is *Will-Worſhip* if this be not? Yea, but the *Matter*

of

of it is good, (this is the ordinary plea, but) so is a great part of the *Popish Missal*, (with which it so much symbolizeth, (especially their *Letany*, the first *Edition* of *ours*); and so of the *Turkish Alcoran*: But will that prove it a *Divine Constitution*? Now, the Question is not, whether it be *Divine Matter*, or not, but whether a *Divine Constitution* or not? and therefore I joyne *Matter* and *Constitution* together: The *Matter* proves not its *Legitimacy*, unless such a *Frame*, *Method*, *Composure* and *Constitution* of VVorship can be proved *Jure Divino*, to be *Christs Own*. *Prayer* is Christs own *Institution*, (I communicate with them in that) but here is my Crime, I joyne not with them in *Prayer* in such a *Dresse* or *Form*, which (though I neither question the *Wisdome* that *composed* it, nor the *Authority* that *imposed* it, yet) I professedly declare, is in my weak judgment meerly *Humane*; and therefore I do not a little wonder that such a man as Mr. *Crofton* should become its *Mecœnas* and *Advocate*, who cannot be ignorant of the unhappy occasion of the first introduction of such *man-devised Forms* and *Frames* into the Christian Church, administred by the prevailing *Arrian* and *Pelagian* heresies, above three hundred years after Christ; nor of the approved Testimonies of *Justine Martyr*, *Tertullian*, &c. witnessing the immunity and freedome of the Church in their dayes from such impositions, alleadged by his *SMECTYMNUAN* Brethren: But the grounds of my doubts herein shall be disclosed in the next answer; however you may judge from what hath already been said, how unjustly *Non-Communion* with the Church of *England* in her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*, is interpreted *sinful Separation*, it being a necessary declension of meer *Will-Worship*.

5. The *Sacrament* of the *Lords Supper* is indeed a Substantial Part of *Real-Solemn* Divine Worship, being one of Christs *Fundamental Institutions*; but the knowne *Violence* of *Imposition*, the *Will-Worship* and *Superstition*, which

which attends the celebration thereof in the Church of *England*, (so that I cannot communicate with her therein *without sinne*) does *warrant* and *necessitate* my (present) *Non-Communion* and *Withdrawment*, this being clearly Mr. *Croftons* alleadged case of *Real Inevitable Necessity*. Thus then,

Though the Church of *England* be a *true* Church (so that a *Total Separation* from her is unwarrantable) and therefore *Communion* with her in all the parts of *Real-Solemn Divine* Worship, wherein I may joyn with her without either *let* or *sin*, be a *Duty*, yet, her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*, appearing to be no part of *Real-Solemne Divine* Worship, but a meer *humane Constitution*; and the *Supper* (though a Substantial Part of *Real-Solemn-Divine* VVorship, yet) being by *corrupt Mixtures* and *Appurtenances*, much *adulterated*, so that I cannot communicate therein *without sin* ; my (present) *Non-Communion* with her, in both the one and the other (which is a *Partial Separation*) is so far from being a *breach of Duty*, that it is *a Duty*, therefore no *Schism*, (the thing charged) which is a *Causeless Separation*, &c. This may acquit me, and all men in my Capacity, from Mr. *Croftons Nick-name* of *Separatist* in the Case. But I refer you, *Sir*, to my next answer for further satisfaction in both.

3. By way of *Retortion*.

Communion with the Church of *England* may be *superseded* in case of *Real-inevitable Necessity* (*ex Concessis*) by Mr. *Croftons* own Doctrine and Assertion ; but *mine* (that I may put in for a *Supersedeas*) is a case of *Real inevitable Necessity* ; therefore (by Mr. *Croftons* own *Acquittance*) my *Non-Communion*, *&c.* is no *sin*, no *Schism*.

There be two things wherein I cannot communicate with the Church of *England*, viz. 1. Her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*: 2. The Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, un-

der her pretent method of *administration* for *Non-Communion* in both which, I alledge a *Real-Inevitable Neceſſity*.

1. The *Neceſſity* of my *Non-Communion* in the *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*, is grounded on *Invincible doubts* about the very *Lawfulneſſe* of ſuch a *Conſtitution*, and thoſe upon three *Maxims* (ſhall I call them?) or *Principles*, which Mr. *Crofton* (poſſibly) would term *Schiſmatical* as well as my *Practice*.

Viz: 1. *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions* that are not *Uſeful*, are *Unlawful*.

2. *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions*, that are not *Needful*, are *Unlawful*.

3. That *Conſtitution* of *Worſhip* which is not *commanded*, is *forbidden*.

(Which though they may ſeem to be very *Paradoxes*, and ſtrange Poſitions in this age, yet I profeſſe to you (without any cenſorious reflection upon either the Principles or Practiſes of others) they hamper me:)

The *Aſſumption* peculiar to each of thoſe *Propoſitions* containeth my *doubt* —

But the *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* of the Church of *England*, is an *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution*, which is neither 1. *Uſeful*, nor (much leſs) 2. *Needful*, nor 3. *Commanded*. *Ergo*, &c.

1. That *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions* which are not *Uſeful* are not *Lawful*, which are *Unprofitable*, are *Unwarrantable* (where, by that which is *unprofitable* I underſtand that which is *un-edifying*) is a Truth bottomed upon a great *Canon Apoſtolick* (in reſpect of which all *Church-Conſtitutions* ought to be Acts of (True) *Canonical Obedience*, viz:) παντα προς οἰκοδομὴν γενέσθω, *Let all things be done unto edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. Now οἰκοδομὴ, *Edification* (according to the language of the Holy Ghoſt) is not only, 1. a Freedom from *poſitive dammage*; nor 2. a *Single*; but 3. a *Succeſſive* and *gradual* Benefit: For Confirmation hereof, I might produce the Joynt-determination

tion and *Vote* of a whole *Jury* of the Orthodox-Learned, *Calvin*, *Junius*, *Tilenus*, *Alſtedius*, *Hoſpinian*, *Beza*, *Pareus*, Prof. *Leidenſ. Jus Canonicum*, *Perkins*, &c. who unanimouſly conclude the ſame, whoſe ſeveral Teſtimonies I ſhould here inſert, but that I muſt ſhun prolixity. 'Tis obſervable what is left upon everlaſting Record, namely, That the *Ceremonial Law* of *Moſes* was *diſanulled* becauſe of its *weakneſſe* and *unprofitableneſſe*, Heb. 7. 18. (that which may be urged (in my mind) invincibly againſt the retention of *Jewiſh Ceremonies* in the *Chriſtian* Church) whence I argue,

If a *Divine Law* (one of *Gods own* making) muſt be reverſed, diſanulled, and aboliſhed, (the Holy Ghoſt himſelf being Judge) becauſe *unprofitable*, (as the *Ceremonial* was, *Chriſt* the *Subſtance* being exhibited) then ſurely (*A fortiori*) all *Humane Laws* (thoſe of *Mens* making, eſpecially *Eccleſiaſtical*) which are *unprofitable*, are (*hoc ipſo*) *unwarrantable*: I ſhould not fear to aſſert this in the face of the world. Now

That the *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* is a *Conſtitution unprofitable* (which is the *Aſſumption*) will need no great labour to prove. 'Tis *hurtfull*, and is that *uſefull*? who cannot witneſs the unhappy Conſequences, Miſchiefs and Inconveniencies attending it? I ſhould ſay but little, if as ſome call *Ignorance* the *Mother of Devotion*, ſo I ſhould call it, *The Nurſery of Ignorance*: Nay what greater *Schiſmatick* this day in *England*? what hath more divided between Faithful *Paſtors* & their dear *People*? the *Service* hath ſtopt the *Prophets mouths*, *pad-lock't* thoſe *lips* which *ſhould preſerve knowledg*; alas! thoſe are but few amongſt the many thouſand *Malignant* Influences of this *Convocation-Wild-fire*: And yet, *There is no hurt in it*, ſay ſome; that's ſtrange! but admit there were not, doth it any *good*? the *Negative* will prove it an *Illegitimate* brood; *yes*, may ſome *Commoner* ſay; and ſo may I ſay of the *Popiſh Miſſa*, it may accidentally profit me; but neither will *Collateral* nor *ſingle*

Benefit prove the *Legitimacy* either of the one or of the other: Further; Is it an *Edifying* Constitution? if not, cashier it for *Apocryphal*, 'tis an *Adulterate* piece: *The waters of the Sanctuary* must rise *higher* and *higher*; now what influence hath it in *building* of a man, a Church-member, up *in his most holy Faith*? were this to *Edifie*? In a word; It must * *Manifestam utilitatem præ se ferre*, (according to *Calvins* Rule,) It must conduce to the *manifest advantage* of the Church of God, to her *growth* and *gradual Proficiency* (since the riper she is for *age*, the riper she should be for *knowledge*, &c.) to the *perfecting* of this *Mystical Building*, Ephes. 4. 11, 12. else (beleeve it) it is not πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν, and if *un-edifying*, then *unwarrantable*. Now how little our *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* is contributary hereunto, let the Impartial judge.

* *Instit.* lib. 4. c. 10. Sect. 32.

2. That *Ecclesiastical Constitutions* which are *Vnnecessary*, are (also) *Vnlawfull*, (the second Proposition) seems to be firmly grounded on the *Authentick Decretal* and *Resolve* of the famous *Synod* of *Jerusalem*, consisting of *Apostles* and *Elders* (Men *extraordinarily* gifted, and *infallibly* guided by the *Holy Ghost*) Act. 15. 28. *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than those necessary things*: An *Imitable* and *Regulative Example* to all *Councels* and *Convocations* in succeeding ages; for there the *Holy Ghost* Himself was *President* (as I may say) *it seemed good* first *to the Holy Ghost*, and then *to Vs*. 'Twas His Own *Visum est*, and *Canon*. — *All Peace be on them that walk according to this Rule.*

That the *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* is an *Vnnecessary* Constitution (which is the *Assumption*), none τῶν ἐπαναγκῶν, none of the *Necessary things* licenced by the Holy Ghost, appears to me from a threefold consideration, namely, Of 1. *Christ*; 2. The *Spirit*; and 3. The *Gospel*.

1. All *Necessary* Parts of *Divine Worship* are by *Christ* (who is the Churches *Law-maker*, as well as *Peace-maker*, the great *Master of Assemblies*) undoubtedly) *instituted*

tuted and *appointed*; else that might be justly imputed to the *Son*, from which the Holy Ghost acquits the *Servant*, Heb. 3. 5. (which were blasphemy once to imagine,) and 'twere not a little strange, if when the *Man Moses* did punctually prescribe all the *Tabernacle-Appurtenances*, even to a *Pin* and *Snuffers*, the *Lord Christ* should not also be *faithfull over his house* in describing and prescribing all the *necessary* Parts of his *Worship* and *Service*; as if *Scripture-Oeconomicks* were defective and incompetent *Church-Rules* without the Contribution of *Men-devised, additional-traditional* Forms, &c. But now the *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* (that *Constitution*) is none of *Christs* either in respect of *Composition*, or (much lesse) *Imposition*; Ergo, &c. Most of the *Matter* though I grant to be *Divine*, yet that will not prove the *Constitution* (the thing in question) *Divine*: What need many words? For the Lords sake let either *Precept* or *President* in either *Christ* or his *Apostles*, be produced for such a *Frame*, *Contexture* and *Constitution* of worship, and the question is decided. The *Lords Prayer* is an *Instance* and *President*, say some! 'Tis *Authentique Common-Prayer* indeed, (and that which I reverence for the *Authors* sake, but not *idolize*) but that it is a *Form*, needs proof; however, be it a *Form*, be it a *Pattern*, it makes nothing against me; for if a *Form*, then *Humane Forms* are *Unnecessary*, (that is my *Quæsitum*) unless men will tax Christs *Own* with some *defect* or *Insufficiency*, —— *Frustra fit per plura*, &c. *Religion* abhors *Superfluities* as well as *Nature*. If Christ hath accommodated me with a *Divine Form* of Prayer (one of his *Own*) I may by Authority slight all *Humane Forms* in the world: Again, If a *Pattern*, then no *President* nor *Protection* to *Set-Forms*, &c.

2. Where the *Spirit of Prayer* is plentifully *effused* and *diffused*, there *Set-Forms* of Prayer are *unnecessary*; because whatever Benefit can be imagined to accrew from *Forms*, all that and much more doth accrew from the *Spirit*;

Spirit: Are *Forms* Helps to the *weak*? cannot they *go* without them? The *Spirit helpeth our infirmities*, Rom. 8. 26. He being the Christians *Auxiliary* in, as well as the *Author* of prayer: Are *Forms* Guides to the *Blind*? cannot they *see* without them? The *Spirits Office* is to—*guide into all Truth*, John 13. 16. Now this same *Spirit* is plentifully powred out in *Gospel-times*, being Christs *Exaltation-Donative*, Act. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. Eph. 4. 8. By vertue whereof the *Christian* hath *commenced a degree* above the *Jewish* Church: *This* being subjected to a *Servile* and *Infant-state*, (the *Legall Constitution*,) That being promoted to a *Filial Adult-State*, (the *Evangelical Constitution* of the Church); *Ergo*, &c.

3. The *Gospel* (Christs *Canon-Law*) is (as a Perfect *System* of *Sound Words* and Doctrine, so) a Sufficient *Directory* for *Worship*, *able to make the man of God perfect*, (2 Tim. 3. 15, 16.) without *Humane Contributions*; *Ergo*, &c.

I am not ignorant that *Errour* hath its *Advocates*; 'tis pleaded, That *Set-Forms* of Prayer are *needfull* for maintaining of *Uniformity*, &c. Good Lord! have those *Patrons* no better *Pleas* than what *Adulterate-Rome* may espouse for defence and insinuation of her *Masse-Service*, and *Metropolitical Antichristian Head*? Are there no *Church-Ligaments*? no *Bonds* or *Badges* of *Church-Vnity*, but what would inevitably destroy *Church-Purity*, if not (eftsoon) *Church-Entity*? Why, will men create more *Necessities* than the Word will *warrant*, and thus occasion more *Sins* than ever God *forbad*? But enough of that. *Sir*, With Your leave I will now conclude that our *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* is *unnecessary*, therefore *unwarrantable*; not *usefull*, not *needfull*, therefore not *lawfull*.

3. That *that* which is not *commanded* in the *Worship* of God (*viz.* in poynt of *Matter* or *Manner*) is (consequentially) *forbidden*, (the third Proposition) may be (in my

my Judgment) undeniably concluded from these three gradual *Axiomes*, (which are indeed κοιναι ἐννοιαι, *Common, Innate, Rational* Principles,) viz.

1. *There is a GOD*; This is πρωτον-πασων, the very *First* and *Fundamental* Article of our *Faith*; a Truth, which the *Creatures* may serve for *Catholick Teachers*, (the *Universe* for an *University*) to *school* us in, *Rom.* 1. 20. *Creation-works* are a *Revelation-Book*, which reveals a *God*, though not a *Christ*; a *Deity*, though not a *Trinity*: *Natural Conscience* is a *Bosom-Volume*, wherein we may read the same; which, should a man become a tractable *Disciple* to, he should never die (in this sense) *Atheist* or *Infidel*. *Davids Fool* may *say in his heart*, *There is no God*, but 'tis not said he (really) *thought* so; for this is a Truth, which may be read by *Natures Common Light*, yea, by *that* of the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*. Psal. 14. 1.

2. *There is Worship due from the Creature to this God.* This is a main τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, one of the prime things which may by *Natures Light* and *Creature-evidence* be *known of God*; a Principle depending upon the former. That very *Light* which convinceth men of a *God-head*, convinceth them also of this *Worship* as a *Natural Debt* and *Tribute* due thereunto: Both are *Common-Creed*: Thus the *Gentiles* are not charged with *Ignorance* of a *God-head*, nor with neglect of *Natural Worship* (the *Thing*), but with a defect in the *Manner* of *Worship*, — *When they knew God, they glorified him not* ὡς θεὸν *AS God*, Rom. 1. 21. Rom. 1. 19.

3. *This God is to be worshipped in a way suitable to his own Will and Nature*: What more *Rational* then this? What *Heathen Socrates* ascribed to his *Idol-God*, surely we may, and must (much more) ascribe to Our *Only True God*, namely, that he must be worshipped μαλιστα αυτῷ ἁρμοττουσῃ τρόπῳ in a way, manner, and method most pleasing to himself; and what Manner or Method of Worship more pleasing to God, then *that* which is agreeable to his Own

Will,

Will, or most *suitable* to his own *Nature*? Now then to apply.

Since there can be no *true Divine Worship*, which is not either *suitable* to Gods *Nature* (as is *Gospel-Worship*, it being *spiritual* as *God* himself is a *Spirit*, Joh. 4. 24.) or (at least) *agreeable* to Gods *Will* (as the *Jewish Worship*, by *Sacrifices* and *Oblations*, the *blood of Buls and Goats*, &c. which had nothing at all to commend it, but the *Quod libet licet*, the very *Will* and *Authority* of the *Law-giver*, (else how *irrational* had it been?) God having by way of *Indulgency*, accommodated the Outward Method and Manner of his *Worship* under the *Law* more to the *Nature* of the *Jewes*, then to his *Own*; whereas *Evangelical Worship* is not only *agreeable* to his *Will*, but *suitable* to his *Nature*). Since the *agreeableneſſe* of *Worship* to Gods *Will*, and the *suitableneſſe* of Worship to his *Nature*, is to be measured by the *Manner*, as well as (if not more then) by the *Matter* of it, (*That* being the *Distinctive Forme* thereof): And since the true *Regular Manner* of *Divine Worship* is only revealed and dictated in and by *Scripture-Canon*; *Scripture Light* directing to the *Manner*, as *Natures Light* directs to the *Object* of Worship; (else what advantage have *We* to whom are committed *the Oracles of God*, over the *Pur-blind Gentiles*? who are not taxed for *not worshipping* of *God* according to the light they had, whereby they were directed to the *Object* of Worship; but for *not glorifying of God AS God*, (Rom. 1. 21.) they failed in the *Manner*): Since (I say) 'tis so, I must needs conclude, that *That Manner* or *Constitution* of *Worship*, which is not *Preſcribed*, is (*ipso facto*) *Probibited*, which is not *Commanded*, is (consequentially at least) *forbidden*. Some (possibly) will *Object*, What Reason, that That which is not *Commanded*, should (consequently) be *forbidden*; more then why that which is not *forbidden*, should be (consequently) *commanded*? (a common Plea in the Case): But, *Diſpar eſt Ratio*, there

there is a great disparity, a *Negative* will prove a *Sin*, but every *Positive* will not prove a *Duty*; thus whatever is *not agreeable* to the *Will* of God is a *Sin*, but all that is *agreeable* to the *Will* of God is not a *Duty*; this is plain, a *Moral Duty* is the *Obligatory Influence* of some *Positive Law*: To proceed then.

That such a *Constitution* as *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* is not *commanded* of God (the *Assumption*) is proved abundantly: Where is there ever a *Deus dixit*, a *Thus saith the Lord* for it in all the Book of God? An *Ecclesia dixit*, will not go down with me, who cannot put *Church-Infallibility* into my *Creed*, nor suffer my soul to become *Captive* to an *Implicite-Faith*. *Infallibility* is one of Gods own *Crown-Royalties*; He onely is *Infallible* in point of *Knowledge*, who is *Immutable* in *Being* and *Existence*. Where is there ever one *Authentick President* for it? Mr. *Crofton* (I know) doth attribute the *Essential Form* of *Prayer* to it (page 25.) which he describes to be, *A calling upon God in the name of Christ*; But if he understand not, in the *Name* of *Christ*, the *Will of Christ*, then I say, 'Tis not a *Right* Description of *Prayer*, (whose (τὸ *Essentiale*) *Essential Form* depends upon the *Rule*, Gods own *Prescript*, it being a *Moral Duty*) no better then what may agree to the *Romish Letany*: But if he do understand therein the *Will of Christ*, I once more call for an instance in some *Authentique Precept* or *President* (the onely *Commentaries* upon Gods *Will Regulative*) for such a *Constitution*; which I despaire ever to see. I might have told you, that it is a *Humane Tradition*, and therefore a sin against the 2. *Commandement*, being contrary to Bishop * *Andrews* his *Modus Præscriptus*, Gods own *Prescribed* * Expos. on *Manner* of worship: But I shall not need to go so far; 2. Com. let it be proved, that it is a *Constitution* whereof *God* is the *Author*, the *Word* the *Rule*, the *Practice Apostolick* the *Pattern*; or what can it be other then *Cultus ex humano cerebro conflictus*? meer *Will-Worship* and *Superstition*, which † *Sir Francis* (being † *the reproach of Deity*) must needs be as well *Bacon*, in his though *Essayes*.

(though not as much) as *Idolatrous Worſhip* diſpleaſing to Him who with his own finger *twice wrote* Himſelf אל קנא *A Jealous God*; who therefore may juſtly ſay of ſuch *Officious Service*;—*Who hath required thes at your hand?* O that men would ſeriouſly conſider (what I tremble at the very thoughts of, namely) the dreadfull doom and ſentence gone out againſt ſuch, as either *add* to, or *ſubſtract* from Gods own *Volume*, Deut. 12. 32. Rev. 22. 18, 19.

Thus *Sir*, a *Conſcience fettered* with *doubts* is that which I plead as a ground of *Real inevitable neceſſity* in this caſe of my *Non-Communion* with the Church of *England* in her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*. So that whereas Mr. *Croſton* pleads for *Communion* with her in that (as well as in other Parts of *Solemn Publique* Worſhip) as a thing not onely *Lawfull*, but *Expedient*, yea, *Indiſpenſably neceſſary*, I queſtion all, viz: not onely the *Neceſſity*, but the *Expediency*, yea the very *Lawfulneſſe* of it, it being in mine opinion upon the accounts aforeſaid, none of the *Real* or *True Worſhip* of God, but meer *Wil-Worſhip* and *Contrivance* of Men, ſo that I cannot communicate therein *without ſin*; For *To him that eſteemeth a thing unclean, to him it is unclean*: And *he that doubteth is damned, if he eat, becauſe he eateth not of faith, for what is not of faith is ſin*, Rom. 14. 14. 23. And what though my *Conſcience* be *Erroneous* herein, yet doth it lay upon me a *Negative Obligation* in the caſe, *Ligat*, though not *Obligat*; Though an *Erroneous Conſcience* obliegeth me not to *do* what it *commandeth*, yet it obliegeth me to *refrain* from what it *forbiddeth*; this is the determination of Learned *Caſuiſts* in the Caſe: *Conſcience* being the *Queen Regent*-Faculty of the ſoul, Gods Own *Repreſentative* therein, muſt not (at leaſt in matters of *Indifferency*) be controled; For * *Quicquid dictat, dictat ſub ratione Voluntatis Divinæ*. Better it is that I ſhould not at all communicate, than to communicate with a *Reluctancy* of Conſcience; for

* Ameſ. de Conſc. lib. 1. cap. 4.

for in such a case, what is an *Indifferency* to another, may be *Iniquity* in me; Mr. *Crofton* should rather *pity* than *censure* such a One; what must all be *cut off* that are not skilled in his *Shibboleth*? His Invective against *Church-Yard-Loyterers*, (Page 24.) might well have been spared in a time, wherein *Vineyard-Labourers* are so few. Judg. 12. 6.

2. The *Real Inevitable Necessity* of my *true drawment* from, or *Non-Communion* in the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, under the present Modes and Methods of Administration in the Church of *England*, is grounded upon the * *Imposed Gesture*, the *Superstition* and *Corruptions* which attend it: (which who can be such a *stranger in* our *Israel* as to be ignorant of)? Though I could go neer to approve of the gesture of *Kneeling*, being left *Arbitrary*, and commended or practised only as an *Outward Badge* of more than ordinary *thankfullnesse*, under the reception of an *Extraordinary Blessing*, and not as an Act of *Piety*, *Necessity*, or *Worship*: And though I shall not (at this time at least) go so far as some, namely, to assert that the *Consecrated Bread* purposely set before *Superstitious Kneelers* (*Protestants*), and the (supposed) *Transubstantiated Bread* purposely placed before *Idolatrous Kneelers* (the *Papists*) is the same, *In Esse Adorabili*; yet two things I shall say: First, A *Papists Idolatrous Kneeling* before the *Bread* (supposed to be *Transubstantiated*, is (in some respect) more *Excusable*, than a *Protestants Superstitious Kneeling* before the *Bread* (being onely) *Consecrated*; for his *Creed* doth (though not *Justifie*, yet) in part *excuse* his *gesture*; Did I beleeve that the *Sacramental Bread*, is no sooner *Consecrated*, than really *Transubstantiated* into the *Body* of Christ, I should think, I should greatly sin if I did not forthwith exhibit *Worship* thereunto, since (as the Orthodox-Learned generally grant) there is *Adoration* and *Worship* due to Christ even as *Man*, viz. by vertue of the *Personal Union* of his *Humane* with his *Divine Nature*. Secondly, The gesture of *Kneeling* at the *Sacra-*

* Constit. and Can. Eccles. *An Dom.* 1603. Can. 27.

ment, &c. in the Church of *England*, having *Necessity* placed in it (else why is it *imposed*, and not left *Arbitrary?*) yea and *holinesse* and *worship* too, (as its * learned *Patrons* inform us), and so becoming a dangerous piece of *Superstition* and *Will-Worship*, I am *warranted* to withdraw, and refuse *Communion* with her therein, by a *Supersedeas* of Mr. *Croftons* own grant, viz: in case of *Real-Inevitable Necessity*; with this assurance, that *God will have mercy and not sacrifice*. The *Sacrament* is a *Priviledge*, but *Superstition* is *Sin*; now I may often warrantably wave a *Priviledge*, but never am I warranted to commit the least *Sin*; and therefore for fear of *Poyson*, I deny my self *Food*. Alas! Mr. *Crofton's* Instances in *Stinking Fish*, &c. *Pudled water*, &c. An *Uncleane Vessel*, &c. yeeld not the least satisfaction to me; what if there be *poyson* in the dish, though never so well *garnished?* My *Dear Friend*, The case is very hard; but what shall I do? If I must dye, let it be by *famine*, as soon as by *poyson*, If I must be *fourty years* without a *Passeover*, (even as long as the *Israelites* were in the *Wilderneſſe* without theirs) *The will of the Lord be done*: I had rather be in the *Wilderneſſe* without it, than go *back to Egypt* for it, while I know that I am in the way towards *Canaan*; not forgetting St. *Bernards Maxim*, *Non privatio sed contemptus damnat*; The *want* of a *Sacrament* is my *Affliction*, but the *Contempt* of it onely (under that want) is my *Sin*; only my prayer is that God would forgive them, *Who make the Lords offering to be abhorred*. Thus *Sir*, I hope you are by this time satisfied in the case, namely, That *Non-Communion* with the Church of *England*, in her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*, as also in the *Lords Supper* under the present method of Administration, in those who yet joyn with her in *Prayer*, *Praise*, *The Word Preached* (Parts of *True Solemn Divine Worship*) as you and I do) is no *breach of duty*, but *a duty*; (the one being no *True Divine Worship*, but *Will-Worship*; the other being though a Substantial *Part* of *Worship*,

yet

* The Arch-Bishop of *Spalato*: Dr. *Burgesse*: Dr. *Mortoun*: Paybody, &c.

yet *Adulterated* and extreamly *Corrupted* Worship) therefore no *SCHISM*, which was the thing charged. Now give me leave before I conclude this, to produce my *Warrant* and *Protection* in the case, from the Church of *Englands* own *Canon* and *Constitution*; namely, the 9th made in the year, 1603. Entituled *Authors of Schisms in the Church of England censured*; the words whereof are these, viz: *Whosoever shall hereafter separate themselves from the Communion of Saints, as it is approved by the Apostles Rules in the Church of England, and combine themselves together in a new-Brotherhood, accounting the Christians who are conformable to the Doctrine, Government, Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, Prophane and unmeet for them to joyn with in Christian Profession, let them be excommunicated*, Ipso facto, &c. Now 1. I separate in case of *Real-Inevitable Necessity* only, therefore not contrary to the *Apostles Rules*; 2. Mine is not *Positive Separation*, therefore no *Combination* in a *New-Brotherhood*; 3. I am not only a *Professor* of the same *Faith*, (which is all the *Canon* seems to require) but a *Partaker* in the same *Ordinances*, (though not in all) with those *who are Conformable*, &c. and therefore that very *Canon* which censureth *Schismaticks*, protecteth *Me*.

Now *Honoured Sir*, Though I perswade my self that your request is satisfied in the case touching *Non-Communion*, &c. Yet cannot I satisfie my self unless I give a brief touch upon Mr. *Croftons* other *Considerations*; and before I come to them, assoile what is objected from the *High Places* amongst the *Israelites*; (*A Recocta crambe* with him, and an ordinary Allegation with all that are of his perswasion in the case in hand).

Do men complain (saith he) *as they have cause, That* Page 39.
some Roman Rites were retained, when this Church was reformed, let them consider, many pious Kings of Judah, have their reforming-Governments stained with a—*But the High Places were not taken away, but the People went thither to worship, yet I find not that any God-fearing Israelites*

who

who loathed those Reliques of Idolatry, ever barred themselves because thereof from Gods Altar and Worship.

Anſ. 1. The *Retention* of *Jewiſh Ceremonies* in the *Chriſtian* Church, is (God knows) a juſt cauſe of *Complaint*, ſince by reaſon of them, the condition of the *Chriſtian* Church, is become more *intollerable* than was that of the *Jewiſh Infant* Church; the *Jews* being ſubjected to *Divine Impoſitions*, the *Chriſtians* (oh, ſad!) to *Humane Preſumptions* (the *Arbitrary Lawes* and *Luſts* of *Men*) witneſſe St. *Auguſtine*. Ad *Januar. Epiſt.* 119. c. 19. Item *Epiſt.* 118. c. 2.

2. If the *Retention* of *Jewiſh-Popiſh Ceremonies* in the Church of *England* at firſt, (when *Reformation* was but *Early*) was a juſt cauſe of Complaint, how much more grievous muſt the *Reduction* of them after *Sacred* and *Solemn Expulſion* be? the Firſt compared to that of the laſt 20 years, being as the *Twilight* to a clear *Sunſhine*: If St. *Auguſtine* complained of the *intollerable burthenſomneſs* of *Ceremonies* in his dayes, (as in the places before mentioned) what cauſe have *we* to complain, &c. in our dayes? For if the firſt *Introduction* of them into the *Roman* Church, was a *Reduction* of *Judaiſme*, how like does the *Reduction* of them into the *Engliſh* Church, look to the *Introduction* of *Romaniſme*? what? and not complain!

3. Mr. *Croftons* alleadged caſe of the *Iſraelites*, and their *High Places*, &c. is (alaſs!) infinitely wide of *Ours*; (and therefore I marvel that a man of ſuch Parts as he is, ſhould once plead the thing): For,

1. Though the *High-Places* of old were, even under *Reforming Governments*, both *retained* and *frequented*, (which I deny not) yet what makes this againſt me, who diſpute not about the *Retention*, but about the *Reſtitution* of a piece of *Superſtition* and *Will-Worſhip*? When did any one of thoſe *Pious Kings* of *Judah*, firſt *reforme*, and then *reſtore* the *High-Places* ſpoken of? Can Mr. *Crofton* inſtance when the *high-Places* were *reſtored* by the *King*,

King, and frequented by the *People*, after *ſacred* and *ſolemn expulſion* of them (to uſe his own words) by Both? O, but *Retrogradations* in *Religion* are dangerous! Let me rather *ſojourn* in a *Wilderneſſe*, then *return* to *Egypt*; Alaſs! this is our Caſe: Who can be inſenſible of the *Retrograde Motion* of *Englands Sun*? Our *high-Places* are *reſtored* after *ſacred* and *ſolemn Expulſion*; a blaſted *Ne-huſtan* reintroduced: Ah! this is the *Spot* in our *Moon*: *'Tis happened to us according to the true Proverb, The Dog is turned to his Vomit, and the Sow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the Mire.* 2 Kings 18. 4. 2 Pet. 2. 22.

2. The *Iſraelites* were confined in their *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* to *Gods Altar*, (*viz.* at firſt in the *Tabernacle*, Lev. 17. 3, 4. and afterwards in the *Temple*, Deut. 12. 5, 6, 11. from which it was not lawful, but upon *extraordinary* occaſions, or by *divine Inſpiration*, to ſeparate;) God having determined upon the *Place*, as well as the *Manner*, of his Worſhip in the *Jewiſh* Church: No wonder then, if the *God-fearing Iſraelites* did not barr themſelves from *Gods Altar* and *Worſhip*, notwithſtanding thoſe *Reliques of Idolatry*, ſince they ſhould have in ſo doing tranſgreſſed a *Poſitive Law*. Now will Mr. *Croſton* argue from hence, againſt the Practice of *Chriſtians*, amongſt whom the *Place* of VVorſhip is a meer Matter of *Indifferency*, *Local-Liberty* being a part of *Goſpel Liberty*, (as hath been cleared above)?

3. Though the *High-Places* were originally deviſed by the *Idolatrous Iſraelites* in imitation of the *Heatheniſh Groves*, yet the *uſe* of them was changed by the *God-fearing Iſraelites*, who (even the *Prieſts* and *Levites* themſelves being of the number, 1 *Chron.* 16. 39.) performed *Religious Worſhip* in an *Idolatrous Place*: Now will Mr. *Croſton* infer from the *Iſraelites worſhipping* in an *Idolatrous Place*, a *neceſſity* of *Communion* in a *Superſtitious Worſhip*? My *Friend*, I diſtinguiſh between *Preſence* and *Communion*. The Devout *Iſraelites* were *preſent* in an

an *Idolatrous Place*, but did not therein *partake* of *Idolatrous Worſhip*: Now, What does Mr. *Croſton* plead for? Is it my *Preſence* only in the Church at the time of *Divine Service* (as it is called)? or is it *Communion* in that *Service*? To be plain with you; The former I could give, and yet refuſe the latter, but ſo, as That alſo ſhall be the fruit of cogent *Neceſſity*, (not of *Choice*) hoping in that caſe for *Naamans Diſpenſation*, 2 Kings 5. 18, 19. (if that ſenſe be received) *Preſence* is a *Civil*, but *Communion* a *Religious* Act, ſo that ſhould I in Obedience to a *Pœnal* Law, or out of *Neceſſity* of hearing of a ſoul-ſaving Sermon, give my *Perſonal Preſence* in the publick Congregation in time of *Common-Prayer*, *knowing that an Idol is nothing in the World*, 1 Cor. 8. 4. let none conclude from my *Preſence* in the *Place*, *Communion* in the *Worſhip*, (or rather *Will-Worſhip*): *Naaman's Servile preſence* in the houſe of *Rimmon* (being granted) would not prove his *Communion* in the *Worſhip* of *Rimmon*, 2 Kings 5. *Elijah* could look upon *Baals Prophets* Sacrificing, and condemn them, 1 *Kings* 18. *God-fearing Iſraelites* did frequent the *High-Places*, but that proves them not *Communicants* in the *Superſtition* or *Idolatry* of thoſe Places: Their *Practice* then herein, are but weak Premiſes to Mr. *Croſtons* Concluſion. Once more;

4. The diſparity between the caſe of the *Iſraelites*, and that of ours, lies greatly in this, *viz.* There the *Worſhip* was *good*, the *Place* only *bad*; but here the *Place* only is *good*, and the *Worſhip* (being meer *Will-Worſhip*) *bad*: So that Mr. *Croſtons* Inference drawn from the *Jewiſh Practice*, in that caſe, againſt *Non-Communion*, &c. is (with me) a manifeſt *non ſequitur*.

CONSID. 2. *Communion with the Church under many and great Corruptions, is not inconſiſtent with Zeal, Care, and Conteſt for Reformation.*

Anſw. 1.

Remonſ. 1. That the *Reformation* of the Church is a *Duty* incumbent upon every Man and Member thereof, to be purſued within the *Verge* of their reſpective *Places* and *Capacities*, by all *Juſt* and *Lawful Means*, is a Truth here ſuppoſed, and hereafter (*Page* 28. 34.) aſſerted by Mr. *Crofton* himſelf: Certain it is, that every *Church-Member* ought to be in this reſpect a *Church-Reformer*: And according as his *Capacity* ſhall vary, whether in reſpect of *Power*, *Intereſt*, *Office* or *Opportunity*, &c. accordingly doth his *Obligation* hereunto, vary alſo.

2. Mr. *Crofton* had done well to have ſtated the queſtion aright *de Eccleſia Reformanda*, *& de Eccleſia Reformata*: The Queſtion with us, is not, Whether *Communion with the Church under many and great Corruptions be conſiſtent with Zeal*, *Care*, and *Conteſt* for *Reformation* thereof? Who will deny that? But this, Whether *Communion* with the Church of *England* under *many* and *great Corruptions* be conſiſtent with *due* and *conſtant endeavours* of *reforming*, after *ſacred* and *ſolemn Expulſion* of the ſame? Nay *Sir*, more particularly yet, 'Tis this (and I would Mr. *Crofton* had well conſidered it, *viz.*) Whether *Communion* with the Church of *England* (not *under*, but) *in* thoſe very *Corruptions* which (he ſays) we are by a *Duty-Obligation bound* (in our *Capacities*) to *reform*, be conſiſtent with *due* and *conſtant endeavours* of *reforming* the ſame? More particularly yet, Whether *Communion* with the Church of *England* in her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer* (That (once) *Exploded Will-Worſhip* and *Corrupt Conſtitution*) be conſiſtent with that *Tie*, whereby we are *bound* to *conſtant endeavours* of *Reformation*? The Queſtion thus ſtated, who cannot but reſolve into the *Negative*? Eſpecially, if he conſider, that the *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer* is not a *Luxurious Branch*, which ought to be *lopt off*, but an *Adulterate Plant*, which ought to be *rooted out*, as being none of *thoſe Plants which our Heavenly Father hath planted*; ſo that the *Reformation* herein obliged to, muſt conſiſt not in an *Alteration*, but in the Math. 15. 13.

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outer *Ejection* and *Abrogation* of such a *Constitution*, (but such as is to be endeavoured only in our several *Places* and *Capacities*, and by *Lawful* and *Warrantable Means*: *Schism* and *Sedition*, *Faction*, and *Rebellion* I am taught of God to abhor, as well and as much as doth Mr. *Crofton* himself.) Now then, If I be bound to contribute by all lawful endeavors, what in me lies, & in my capacity, to the *Reformation* (that is, to the *Extirpation*) of such an *Adulterate Constitution* (viz. the *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer*), how inconsistent with such a *Tie* must my *Communication* in that worship be! Were not this to *plant* what I am bound to *root up*? and to *build* what I am bound to *destroy*? Or if I should after *sacred* and *solemn Ejection* thereof, *re-embrace* or *countenance* or *communicate* in it, were not that to *return* with the *Dog* to the old *Vomit*? to *re-build* our (once) demolished *High-Places*? and is this to *reform*? *Connivance* is to Mr. *Crofton* (Page 28.) an Argument of *Affection*; and *Communion* is to me an Argument of *Connivance*: Ah! my *Good Friend*, *Happy is he that condemneth not himself, in that thing which he alloweth.* How can I *countenance* or *communicate* in that *Worship*, whereof I am *bound constantly to endeavour* the *Reformation*? Yes, saith Mr. *Crofton*, very well, while the *Matter* is good, the outward *Mode* or *Method* only bad: This is his *Recocta Crambe*, but he must prove the *Whole Frame* and *Constitution* good, which as yet he hath not done, else 'tis but a meer evasion. Now let me ask, What is it that he is bound to *reform*? Is it the *Matter* of the *Liturgy*, &c.? Or the *Outward Mode* only? or the *Constitution* and *Whole Frame* of such a Worship? the *Whole Frame* and *Constitution*, surely, a piece of *Adulterate Worship*, else why was it ever wholly *exploded* and *ejected*? But This *Reformation* is to be *endeavoured* only in our several *Places* and *Capacities*: Truth, But the *Negative* Part obliegeth *ad semper*, thus, Though I cannot *go on*, yet I am bound *never to go back*; my *Progress* may be obstructed, but my *Regress* is not thereby warranted; If my *Sun* be hindered in its *Course*, let

Rom. 14. 22.

let it *ſtand ſtill*, rather then *goe, one*, much leſs, *ten degrees backward*: My *Poſitive endeavours* may be *ab extrinſeco* obviated, ſo that I *can* not *reform*, but the *Moral Obligation* cannot be violated, ſo that I *muſt* not *retreat*; the *Negative* is the leaſt that I am in the caſe oblieged to: Now, If by Mr. *Croftons* own Rule, (Page 28.) *Error cui non reſiſtitur, approbatur*, the *non-reſiſtance* of *Errour* (viz. when 'tis in our power to give a ſtop) be an *Allowance* of it, and *Connivance* be an *Act* and *Argument* of *Affection*, what muſt *Perſonal Communion* in the *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*, be? ſurely an Act and Argument of, *Connivance* in, *Allowance* of, and *Affection* to it: And how inconſiſtent this is with his alleadged *Zeal*, *Care*, and *Conteſt* for (and *due uninterrupted Endeavours* of) *Reformation*, &c. let the impartial judg. *Sir*, I need not to tell you that I am under no Obligation from the *Oath*, commonly called the *Solemn League* and *Covenant*, (I never took *That*, more then the ſlaviſh *Engagement*, which you well know); who then can imagine that I ſhould once plead That? But had it been my ſad Lot to be, either through a *Precipitant Zeal* (the *Predominant humour* of former Times) *entangled*, or by the *circumventing Perſwaſives* of *Covenant-Zealots*, *inveagled*, into ſuch a *Labyrinth*, and yet *free*, yea, *forward* with Mr. *Crofton* and other Reverend and VVorthy *Preſbiters*, to ſwallow down *Common-Prayer*, and to *proſelyte* others to *Communion* therein, I ſhould have owned my ſelf a perpetual Debtour to *King* and *Parliament* for a *Releaſe*, whoſe *Wiſdome* judged it fit to open a door of *Liberty* by diſanulling that *Oath*. But I go on.

Reformation and *Separation* (ſaith he (whereof *Voluntary Non-Communion* is the *Privative Part*) *though confounded, yet are in themſelves vaſtly different, inconſiſtent, and deſtructive each to other*. Page 30.

Anſ. 1. *Separation* from the *Common-Prayer*, is an Act of *Reformation*, being a *Continuation* of *Reforming Endeavours* in this juncture of time, wherein *Scrupulous Weaklings*, are loth to contribute to the *maintaining* of That by

their *Practice*, which after *Solemn Ejection*, is *returned* and *retained* by *Power*. 'Tis *Negative Reformation*; an Act of *Primitive Zeal*; whereby those Persons refuse to *conform* to, what they cannot (positively) *reforme*; the same Principle obliging them to *decline* and *disown* it, when (after *Expulsion*) *restored*, that at first obliged them (and possibly Mr. *Crofton* too) to that *Expulsion*; 'Twere strange if it should be otherwise.

2. *Separation sinfull*, and *Reformation*, are indeed *inconsistent*, and *destructive each to other*: *Virtus stat in medio*: *Reformation* (which supposeth *Church Entity*) is an Act of Vertue, equally opposite to those Extreams, *Superstition* and *Separation* (the *Scylla* and *Charybdis*, the two *Rocks*, upon either of which, the *Mysticall Ark* (the Church) is in danger of being *split*) the one being destructive to *Church-Purity*, the other to *Church-Unity* (as hath been said), so that, That very Principle, which obliegeth to *Reformation* (be it *Conscience*, or *Conscience* under such or such *Enforcements*, &c.) doth *ipso facto* oblige to an *Equal abhorrency* and *detestation* of *Both*: And thus, *Schism*, I abominate, 'tis a thing my Soule loathes, I desire to *keep the Unity of the Spirit*, *in the Bond of Peace* (Mr. *Crofton* wrongs me if he thinks otherwise), for I am sufficiently apprehensive, how neer, *Church-Rents* border upon *Church-Ruine*. But now, That *Separation* onely is *Sinful* and *Schismatical* which is *Causelesse*, and not *warranted* by the (often mentioned) Case of *Real-Inevitable-Necessity*; which will acquit me from such an Imputation, who communicate with the Church of *England* in *Prayer*, *Praise*, the *Word*, Parts of *True Divine Worship*, but decline, and modestly refuse Communion with her onely in those two things; viz: 1. Her *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*; 2. The Sacrament of the *Lords Supper* under the present *Method of Administration* and *Appendices*; the first appearing to be no part of Christs *Instituted Worship*; the second (though for *substance* a Part of Christs *Instituted Worship*, yet) being by *Superstition* and

and *Adulterate Mixtures* of *Phariſaical Leaven* with the *Sacramental Bread*, &c. ſo extreamly *corrupted*, that I cannot communicate with her therein *without ſin*; I cannot partake of the *Sacrament*, but that I muſt partake of the attending *Superſtition* too; I cannot celebrate the *Death memorial* of a *Crucified Lord*, but that I muſt by ſin *crucifie* that *Lord afreſh*, and thus *Commemorate* his *Death* with his *Death*. I muſt add,

3. There is a *Separation Paſſive*, whereby *Paſtors* are ſeparated from their *People* (their *Charge*) and a *breach* made upon their *Joynt-Communion*; Hereby judge who are the greateſt *Schiſmaticks*; Thoſe who are *ſeparated*, being by a *Violent Interruption* at firſt *driven away*, and by *Prevalent Corruptions* (at leaſt in the Things juſt now mentioned) *kept away*, and barred from *Communion*, &c. or, Thoſe who *cauſe* that *Separation*: This is a *Pœnal* Evil, the Condigne puniſhment of our *Laodicean Neutrality* and *Lukewarmneſſe* in the work of *Reformation*; there have been in former times too too many *Jehu-like Reformers*, who have made *Religion* to ſtoop to a *Carnal Intereſt*, to *Secular* and *Selfiſh Ends* and *Aimes*; this hath *kindled a fire in Heaven*, which nothing but *Prayers* and *Tears*, &c. can *quench*; for This, *A fire is kindled againſt Jacob, and anger alſo is come up againſt our Britiſh-Iſrael*: Ah! for this hath God *profaned the Princes of the Sanctuary*. Pſal. 78. 21. Iſa. 43. 28.

I cannot (ſaith he, page 31.) *without trembling conſider the Circumciſed Sects in the Church of Corinth are charged to have left the Head, by leaving the Body*, &c. Col. 2. 19.

Anſ. 1. This is a ſtrange Argument to be urged againſt his cenſured *Non-Communicants*, unleſs they be proved to be (ſuch as by his own confeſſion, thoſe whom the Apoſtle there taxeth, were, viz:) *Circumciſed Sects*, or guilty of ſuch *Corruptions* as will amount to a — *Not holding of the Head*, the thing there charged upon thoſe *Circumciſed Sects*, and as juſtly chargeable upon all *Judaizing Chriſtians*, who contend for the *Introduction* and *Retenti-*

on

on of the *Antiquated*, *Jewish Rites*, and *Ceremonies*, in the *Christian* Church: for this is (virtually) to deny that the Son of God is come in the *flesh*, He being the *Body* and *Substance prefigured* and *shadowed* thereby; This is *Real Antichristianism*; Enough to turn a *Bethel* into a *Bethaven!* Now who in *England* are most *Criminal* herein, who most exposed to the *Apostolick Censure*, let an *Altar* and *Organ*, and other *Romish Reliques* and *Jewish Popish Ceremonies*, witnesse: Ah * *Jerub-baals* are rare in our age. Is this *Reformation?* Yes, such another as was that of King *Henry* the Eighth, when he had renounced the *Popish Jurisdiction*, but retained the *Ceremonies*; whom *Luther*, (that great *German-Reformado*) upbraided with a — *He hath killed the Popes Body, but saved his Soul*: Yet

1 Joh. 4. 3. *Qui negat Christum in Carne venisse, hic est Antichristus.* Tertul. lib. *de carne Christi.*

* Judg. 6 32.

2. That the Church is Gods *Ark of Salvation*, and therefore not to be *totally* and *universally* forsaken, upon perill of inevitable Ruine, is a received principle with me. The Church is both an *Ark* of *Safety*, and an *Ark* of *Plenty*; It saves both from *drowning* and *starving*: *Noahs Ark* saved from the *Deluge*, all that were in it, and none but those: The *Ark* under the Law contained in it three things, viz: *Aarons Rod*, the *Tables of Testimony*, the *Pot of Manna*, Heb. 9. 4. This *Ark* represented the *Church*; *Aarons Rod*, *Discipline*; the *Tables of Testimony*, the *Word*; and the *Pot of Manna*, the *Sacrament*: Where is either *Soul-Safety*, or *Soul-Plenty*, to be had but within the *Verge* and *Limits* of the *Church*? This is the only *Ark* that can *land* us *safe* at the *Heavenly Haven*, the *Land of Rest*; so that *Universal Separation* must needs forestall *Salvation*: But enough of that. *Generalia non pungunt.*

Page 37. CONSID. 3. *Scandal is an Argument of no strength, when pleaded to supersede, or condemn a Positive duty.*

Remonst. 1. Who denies this? But *Communion* with the Church of *England* in her *Common-Prayer* (it being none

of

of Christs *Instituted Worship*)is not as yet proved to be a *Positive duty: What Communion hath light with darkness?* 2 Cor. 6. 14. 16. But 2. *Scandal* is an Argument or strength, when pleaded in matters of *Indifferency* (by his own confession, P. 39.) now such I hope he will grant (which I cannot as yet do) our *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer* to be, unless he say as a Reverend *Bishop* (one of the greatest in this Nation) once upon occasion said to me; who when I humbly desired to know wherein the *weak* were to be *indulged*, was pleased to resolve it into Things *Indifferent*; and I assuming that a *Liturgy* or *Common-Prayer* is a Thing *Indifferent*, replyed, 'Tis not *Indifferent* when *imposed*: And then, farewell *Christian Liberty*, for there is nothing *Indifferent* (in *Actu exercito*, or) when *imposed*. But *Right Reverend Fathers*, &c. what a wofull case is this? You tell us, that in things *Indifferent* we are to *indulge* the *weak*; and yet by reason of your *Impositions*, you leave nothing *Indifferent*; far be it from *You* to render that *Necessary* by *Your Law*, which (you grant) should be left *Arbitrary* by *Gods Own*: There is an *Indulgency* (you grant) allowed us by the *Law* of *God* (Rom. 14. 13, 15, 21. 1 Cor. 8. 9, 13.) and yet how are we abridged of it by the *Laws of Men*? Is this *Charity*? or is it *Sacriledge*? Now 3. VVhy may not *Scandal* accrue from Mr. *Crofton's Communion* in, as well as from his *Conformity* to the *Common-Prayer*? May not a *weak* Brother hereby *suffer* in the *tortures* of a *Scrupulous Conscience*, being *racked* between his own *doubts* and the *Offenders Practice*? Or, may not this administer to him an occasion of *sinning*, either in his *condemning* of that which may be *Lawful* to Mr. *Crofton*, seeming *Unlawful* to him; or, in *doing* what yet he *condemns* or *doubteth* of, being animated thereunto by Mr. *Croftons* Practice? Or, may not this tend to the *hardening* of men in sin? And is not this Real *Scandal*, being *Factum quo alius deterior redditur?* (Amandus Polanus, *Synt. Theol. l. 6. c. 3.*) I dare say many *Non-Conforming Ministers*, who have judged a *set Form* of Prayer to be *Lawful* in *it self*, and therefore a thing which might be *used* without any *trespass* upon either the Law of *Piety* (the *Word*), or the Law of *Purity* (*Conscience*), who yet would have totally declined it upon the account of the Law of *Charity*, fearing least they should *destroy him* (or them) *with* their *meat*, *for whom Christ died*, Rom. 14. 15. Now 'twere strange if this were an Argument strong enough

against

againſt *Conformity*, and yet an Argument of no ſtrength againſt *Communion*: But *Scandal* in this caſe is *Offence taken* only, not *given*? This is as Common as the Prayer it ſelf, but 'tis aſſumed *gratis*. However 4. Admit it were *ſcandalum accep um*, an *offence taken*, and *groundleſs*: Shall there be no *Indulgence* ſhewed in that caſe? What ſhall we think of the *Chriſtians* in the Primitive times? the *weaker* had no *cauſe* or *ground* to be *offended* with the *ſtronger* about their *Indifferent* uſe of *meats*, Chriſt having purchaſed for them an *abſolute liberty* therein; & yet what ſtrict laws are by St. *Paul* enacted, againſt the *ſcandalizing* of ſuch? and is it not his own *Perſonal Reſolve* in the caſe, to become a perpetual *Debtor* to *Flesh*, rather than a *Debtor* to the law of *Charity*? (1 Cor. 8 13.) This was my Reply to that Reverend *Biſhop*, when he was pleaſed to aſſert, that the *weak* are not at all to be *indulged*, where there is no *cauſe* or *ground* of *offence*; (and if there be any *real ground* of *offence*, how can they be called *weak*?) Strange *Diocesian* Doctrine!

CONSI. 4. *I am not without the Caution and Conduct of the ſober Godly, Learned Promoters & Purſuers of a Perfect & Compleat Reformation.* Remon 1. 'Tis ſtrange Mr. *Croſton* ſhould argue from *Communion* amongſt *Diſtinct Churches*, againſt the preſent *Non-Communion* of *Particular Members* of one & the ſame Church; ſince that which is between the other *Reformed* Churches, and this of *England*, is a *Communion*, not by way of *Participation* or *Joynt-Fellowſhip* &c. but of *Profeſſion* of the ſame true *Religion* only, which I have here owned, and aſſerted. 2. There are indeed *Liturgies uſed* (though not *impoſed*) in ſome of thoſe *Reformed* Churches, But (though they are not *Mala per ſe* yet) this proves them not *Authentique* more than the *Prieſts* and *Levites Sacrificing* in the *High Places* (1 Chr. 16.39.) proves thoſe *Lawful*; why then may they not be looked upon as *Spots* in *their Feaſts*? God conniving at thoſe in *Chriſtians*, as He did at *Polygamy* amongſt the *Jews*, which yet he did not approve of. 3. Mr. *Croſtons* Inſtance in the *Primitive Non-Conformiſts* is wide of that of the *Modern*; for our *Communion in* the *Liturgy* and *Common-Prayer*, were a *Relapſe* and *Return* into (I am loath to ſay) an *Egyptian darkneſs*, after a *Noone-day Sunſhine* of the *Goſpel*; and that (by Mr. *Croſtons* own grant) after *Sacred* and *Solemn Exulſion* thereof; now *Promoters* of *Reformation*, are no *Patterns* of a *Retrogradation*; ah! this may humble *Englands declining Sun! lengthned Shaddower* (Jer. 4.6.)! 'Tis *Low Water* in the *Sanctuary*! our *Engliſh Ark* is retarded in Her *Voyage* Heaven-ward! *Wind bound* by *Set-Forms*, &c. ſaint *Gailes* of the *Spirit*! perſwaded I am, were thoſe *Worthies* now alive, they would be loth to become *Baals* (either) *Advocates* or *Adherents*. 4. What does Mr. *Croſton* think of the *thouſands* of *Non Conforming* Miniſters in our days, who (in my mind) deſerve the name of, *Church*, as well as any *Papal Conclave*, or, *Prelatical Convocation* in the world: But however 5. I muſt not draw every *Example* into a *Rule*, *Judaizing Peters* I muſt not pattern by; Mr. *Croſton* and his *Liturgy-Communicant-Fellow Preſbyters*, I reſpect and reverence; but be he a MOSES, be he an AARON I have no warrant to *follow* him any further then he is a *Follower of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 11.1.

Now Dear *Sir*, The good *Spirit* of God be your *Convoy* to guid you through the *Syrtes* of this World in a ſtraight courſe *Canaan*-ward, that you may not ſplit upon the Rock, either of *Church-rending Separation* on the one, nor *Church-Adulterating-Superſtition* on the other hand, till he at length *land* you ſafe *within the Vail*.

T. P.

FINIS.